

3^{er} CONGRESO DE LA UIS PyJ DE LA FSM

15 y 16 de abril 2024 - Atenas

*Reforcemos la
organización mundial de
pensionistas de la FSM*

3^{ème} CONGRÈS DE L' UIS P&R DE LA FSM

15 et 16 avril 2024 - Athènes

*Renforçons l'organisation
mondiale des pensionnés
de la FSM*

3rd CONGRESS OF THE WFTU TUI P&R

April 15-16, 2024 - Athens

*Let's strengthen the
International pensioners'
organization of the WFTU*

3^ο ΣΥΝΕΔΡΙΟ ΤΗΣ ΔΙΕΘΝΟΥΣ ΚΛΑΔΙΚΗΣ ΟΡΓΑΝΩΣΗΣ ΣΥΝΤΑΞΙΟΥΧΩΝ ΤΗΣ ΠΣΟ

15 - 16 Απρίλη 2024 - Αθήνα

*Ενδυναμώνουμε
την Διεθνή Οργάνωση
των Συνταξιούχων της ΠΣΟ*



**Pensionistas
y Jubilados**

UIS de la FSM

**SPEECHES OF DIMOS KOUMPOURIS
IN THE 3rd CONGRESS OF TUI P&R OF WFTU**

Greeting speech of Dimos Koumpouris at the 3rd Congress of the TUI PENSIONERS of the WFTU at the opening of the conference

Dear fellow comrades , delegates of our 3rd congress, dear guests

The pensioners of Greece welcome you to our country, we wish you good strength, good health, good staying, good luck in the works of our congress.

We are particularly pleased and honoured that our comrades are attending our conference and will address our conference.

The General Secretary of the WFTU Pambis Kiritsis, the Honorary President of the WFTU George Mavrikos, George Peros member of the WFTU Secretariat and the Executive Secretariat of PAME.

We do not hide that the realization of the congress process in Athens is a great honour for us, as well as for the class trade union movement and the workers of our country who these days are again on the road of struggle. As you already know, on 17/4/24 we will have another nationwide strike and we will take part in its strike meeting.

We express our special joy and satisfaction because exactly the 3rd congress of our organization is taking place through a militant march and action of pensioners all over the world, in particularly difficult conditions formed in the period since our previous congress.

We are proud that the militant hearts of our comrades from all over the world, the class militants, are beating here today, in the hall of our conference, together with the militant Greek pensioners, the representatives of the Coordinating Committee of Struggle, who represent the whole of the pensioners' organisations of our country.

The struggles of pensioners all over the world, the path we have taken, fill us with optimism and strengthen our faith that the work of our 3rd Congress will be a dynamic process, which will equip us with important tools to continue our struggle with greater determination to meet the demands of today.

We underline as important and positive the fact that our congress is taking place in its regular duration since the previous one, in Bogota, Colombia in February 2019 and after the 18th WFTU Congress held in May 2022 in Rome, Italy, as a continuation of our founding congress held in 2014 in Spain.

All the activities of our organization until today fully justify the decision of the WFTU to establish it. We are optimistic and we will continue more intensively all our efforts to respond to the needs and demands of the pensioners' movement today, in close cooperation with the workers' and people's movement.

Our congress can only be a living class process since it is represented by living class militant trade unionists who through their struggles and action have dedicated their lives to the struggle for a life worth living and enjoying for the real producers of wealth.

Fighters who, despite their advanced age, are fighting the battle not only in their own countries but are fighting battles all over the world, through an internationalist process that requires special effort and fortitude to respond.

It is only through such composition, experience, and militant stubbornness that we cannot but express our optimism that our congress will be successful and will be an important internationalist class struggle step on the way to meeting the difficult tasks we have to face.

We know the difficulties and problems, the class opponents we have and their ability to manoeuvre, at the economic, political and trade union level.

But we know very well that they are not omnipotent because the society they build, advocate and serve is based on injustice, exploitation, on a lie that has short legs, whose dead ends are growing.

They know that the great weakness of the system they serve is insurmountable because the wealth produced by the labour of the many, which is the source of all creation, cannot be shared fairly for its producers, because it contradicts the needs of the profitability of greedy capital. This is the reason why the modern needs of the producers of wealth do not fit into the development they claim and cannot be satisfied.

We see it every day when the technologies the possibilities of the production process take off the lives of the workers who create them the pensioners in general the popular strata are getting worse in all areas of their lives.

When there is a huge redistribution of wealth at the expense of the real producers of wealth, with huge super-profits for a handful of plutocrats.

We see the deadly results in the countries we live in, when on the altar of the profit of the business conglomerates, what was won by the working class through struggle and blood is smashed. When all social needs are sacrificed since they are brought into the logic of the commercialization of profit.

When everywhere poverty, hunger and disease reign and expand, leading millions of people and children to death by starvation.

Insecurity is increased by bloody wars that also lead to millions of people being mutilated to death.

We know and it is becoming increasingly obvious that this exploitative system can bring neither prospects nor progress but only misery and disaster.

But we know from historical experience and the history of man on earth that no exploitative system has ever surrendered on its own. No exploiter has been moved by the sad tragic situation of the exploited. All the changes through the centuries that have brought solutions to the exploited have taken place and bear the stamp of hard class struggle.

Everything that has been conquered so far is the result of hard struggle that changed the balance of power against the exploiters until their overthrow.



But we are not removed from the present reality and the objective conditions that shape it. It may be as we say that this unjust exploitative system has objectively eaten its bread and this may be true in terms of objective conditions, but it will never change and by itself fall unless the subjective factor the working class and its allies take the case of this necessity into their own hands.

This task also falls to us who are the defenders of work but not of struggle and life.

This need passes through our more determined work to create and strengthen our pensioners' organisations everywhere.

Next to the workers' unions with independent and joint action on all problems on the basis of our real modern needs.

We are not a guild, we do not fight and struggle only for ourselves but for our children and grandchildren, for a society where human labor and the wealth produced will not become a commodity for the profits of the capitalists but a product that serves the needs of its producer.

We are optimistic that our 3rd Congress will be an important step in this difficult but unique path to progress.

Good strength and health good results in our work.



Introductory speech of Dimos Koumbouris at the 3rd congress of the Pensioners of the WFTU based on the presentation of the first document.

Dear combatants

In the introduction that you have in your materials we detail the elements that our struggle will develop in the coming years.

From my introductory speech I want to dwell on and mention the following issues in the short time available.

Today the militant action of the workers, pensioners and people's movement is developing in difficult and peculiar conditions more than ever before in the whole world.

These are determined by the imperialists' antagonisms, which are becoming more and more acute, by the pursuit of profit and the pursuit of their primacy at world level.

One of the most tragic problems that peoples have experienced over the years is imperialist wars. Since the period of the overthrows in the USSR and other socialist countries, humanity has known the most destructive wars and conflicts all over the world such as: in Yugoslavia, in Iraq, in Afghanistan, in Libya, in Syria, in Palestine by the murdering state Israel and its NATO allies, conflicts on all continents. Especially the war between Russia and NATO, with the assistance of the reactionary government of Ukraine. War between peoples who have lived together for seventy years and created wonders for their prosperity, with a huge positive effect between the workers and peoples of the whole world.

Today, the modern capitalist world is plagued by enormous contradictions, conflicts, wars, poverty, insecurity. Inequalities between countries are growing. The attack of capital, political parties, governments - no matter how they politically define themselves - that manage and serve its needs against what the people have earned to live better, has become the decisive element for its deadly growth, which is the cause of the suffering experienced by the peoples all over the world.

All these and many other dangerous elements for the prospect and future of humanity reveal the inability and refusal of the capitalist system to provide solutions to the modern problems of humanity, as its supporters misleadingly propagated after the overthrows in the USSR and other socialist countries.

The result of these policies is that the labour, wage, social security, pension rights of the peoples, which they won with struggles, sacrifices and blood, are being struck down and abolished. The public service enterprises in telecommunications, energy, water supply, public transport are being privatised and are being handed over to big capital to invest its accumulated profits. The education system from pre-school to university and post-graduate education, social security, health, medicines, sport, culture are being sacrificed on the altar of the profit of the commodity groups. The land, the beaches, the mountains, the virgin



forests are either destroyed or handed over for exploitation to the big monopolies.

All civil protection services, the needs for fire-fighting, flood and earthquake protection are being downgraded. No necessary projects are carried out in these sectors, which are not eligible except for those that generate profits for the business groups. At the same time, the invocation of climate change by governments is an operation to justify the consequences of natural disasters, which their policies leave unchecked.

The prices of food, consumer goods and commodities, energy, and inflation are taking off. Taxation for the popular strata becomes unbearable, while tax exemptions and reliefs for big capital are extended.

Authoritarianism is growing everywhere, police democracy, anti-labour legislation and obstacles to the action of the workers' movement, to the organisation of its struggles and strikes are being strengthened.

Everywhere huge propaganda mechanisms are created with recruited paid propagandists, whose aim is to slander the workers' and people's movement and to spread illusions with half-truths and outright lies.

They create, organise fascist, racist groups and parties that turn against the organised class workers' and people's movement and its demands.

In the same line on the same side is the governmental, employers' trade unionism, the so-called yellow unions.

dear combatants

The deadly course of the exploitative system against the popular strata is also responsible for the enormous inequalities, poverty, the lack of food, clean water, health-care facilities, medicines, electricity, housing.

For the misery, malnutrition, of billions of people, millions of children who die of hunger every year.

It feeds the migratory flows to the developed capitalist countries, where poverty and destitution are also taking on enormous proportions.

Over the years the unequal distribution of global wealth has been further widened following the international synchronised capitalist crisis. Wealth is increasingly concentrated in fewer hands.

These are the gifts of capitalist domination around the world. On the one hand poverty, misery, exploitation for workers and peoples, the real producers of wealth, on the other hand huge concentration of super-profits for them. This society and its development cannot have a future. The society that will abolish exploitation, where the real producers of wealth, the workers, become its masters and satisfy their modern needs, in terms of objective conditions, is at the door.

The preparation of the subjective factor is also our business.

Dear Colleagues.

In this situation, on the other hand, it is hopeful that in Europe and all over the world, mass, militant, anti-war struggles are developing that in their essence challenge and oppose the dominant policies of the exploitative system. In our country these struggles are dynamically at the forefront of the struggle.

In these conditions, difficulties and possibilities, we are called to develop our struggle in the coming years.

The formation of a unified understanding of the content of the organisation of the class pensioners' trade union movement is a necessary condition.

It is necessary to establish the understanding that the struggles, which must be developed unceasingly with the pioneering contribution of class trade unionists, on the problems of the life of pensioners throughout the world, however much they may form the basis of a united struggle and action, do not in themselves lead to the development of class political consciousness.

Hence the tasks of the ideological-political struggle of class trade unionists within the movement to strengthen its anti-capitalist-anti-imperialist direction. These tasks include the elaboration of demands for struggle and the choice of forms of organisation and alliance with popular forces, first of all with the working class, and presuppose a good knowledge of the situation of the pensioners, but also of the new mechanisms and methods of manipulation by the bourgeoisie.

The basic task of the struggle of the workers' and people's movement, but also of the workers' defenders, who have a special experience, is through the class struggles to raise the consciousness of the subjective factor to the level of today's needs.

To give inspiration through our struggles to the pensioners, in united cooperation with the working class, the popular strata, to fight for their rights based on the satisfaction of their real needs, through a movement that will highlight the class causes and those responsible for the present tragic situation.

The battle should be fought for profound changes on all fronts, the movement should not be trapped in the needs of the system by supporting alternative forms of government, by the alternation of different parties in governments, regardless of how they define themselves as right-wing, socialist, social democratic, left-wing, etc, confusing their differences and their declarations, which do not escape the management of the capitalist system and its strategic objectives, trapping the workers in its own needs.

In the work of our conference we need to discuss all these important elements, which will determine the developments in the world in the coming years and will of course influence our own work, the goals we will set and the development of our action.



It requires daily friction, education, concern and care from our leadership bodies, so that the initiative, the daily action, will rise. Orientation and creative control is required to form clear knowledge of developments.

Our difference with the employers' governmental trade unionism, the yellow unions is not only in the militant, class struggle for the quantity and quality of the public and free social services and goods provided, but goes deeper, touching the very organization and content of these services, to realize that their full satisfaction does not «fit» within the framework of the exploitative system, it is necessary to understand the confrontation and conflict with its strategy.

Competitors.

A particular and important role in this struggle and perspective as a key element of the work of the pensioners' unions is the participation of women in our movement by strengthening our ideological intervention. The composition of our congress testifies to this weakness.

If we look at the problems of women as a whole, we will notice that in the last 25 years there has been an increasing deterioration in the support of motherhood by the state, the intensification of work, unstable working hours, unemployment and in general the factors that worsen the position of the working woman and the young woman.

Throughout the capitalist world, all governments, under the responsibility of all governments, have used «gender equality» to abolish positive regulations in favour of women, such as the equalisation of the retirement age for women and men, the abolition of the ban on night work for women, etc.

The racial dimension of the women's issue is not only about discrimination against women in the context of exploitative society, but also about the specific social needs of women because of their reproductive role.

dear comrades

It becomes even more imperative that our trade unions should take specialised action on women of working-class, popular affiliation or origin both independently and through the ranks of the workers' and people's movement in order to increase women's participation.

At the same time, efforts to increase women's participation require an intensification of the struggle with modern forms of women's manipulation through bourgeois, petty-bourgeois and opportunist views on the causes of women's oppression, i.e. modernised theories of «patriarchal society», «modern masculinity», and new anti-scientific theories of «social gender».

Let it be clear that the class trade union movement is steadily fighting to eliminate discrimination against women in all their rights.

dear comrades

For our part, having the experience now, as fighters of work but not of struggle and life, we have to put our own stone in this struggle with all our strength, overcoming any difficulties and problems we encounter in the organization of our struggle.

From our 3rd Congress we send our militant comradeship greetings and a message of optimism to the world working class. To our colleagues and colleagues of the world class movement. To our fellow officers of our world trade union federation, the WFTU. To our fellow pensioners and trade unionists in every country and to all those who are fighting for a society that will write on its flag the abolition of the exploitation of man by man.

Athens 1/4/24

Dimos Koumpouris





Presentation of Dimos Koumpouris in the 3rd Congress of TUI P&R of WFTU

Dear colleagues, delegates of our 3rd conference, dear guests.

We have come to the 3rd Congress of our organization through struggle and action in particularly difficult conditions that have been formed since our previous Congress. A course that fills us with optimism and strengthens our belief that its work will be a dynamic process that will equip us with important tools to continue our struggle with greater determination to meet the demands of today.

For the pensioners of Greece, it is a particular honor for the congress process to take place in our country, beyond its essential aspect. On their behalf we welcome you and wish you all good strength, health and a pleasant stay in our country.

The developments from our second conference.

Our congress takes place in its normal duration since the previous one, in Bogota, Colombia in February of the year 2019 and after the 18th congress of the WFTU held in May of the year 2022 in Rome, Italy.

We firmly believe that our entire course and action since our founding congress, held in 2014 in Spain, until today fully justify the decision of the WFTU to establish our organization. For our part, we consider the trust we have received a great honor and responsibility, we are optimistic, and we will continue more intensively all our efforts in order to respond to the needs and demands of the pensioners' movement today, in close collaboration with the working people's movement.

This optimism is not emotional, nor does it express a wish, but comes from our own action over the years through its positive and negative aspects.

Above all from the action of the last few years, after the second Congress in Colombia, where we have been forced to act in very difficult and unprecedented circumstances, shaped by the conditions of the pandemic throughout the world. This problem was not only made difficult by the impact and rapid spread of the disease, but above all by the response of the governments that managed it. On the one hand, according to the needs of the unjust exploitative system, the profitability of the pharmaceutical business groups and the private health structures ensured huge excess profits. On the other hand, for the workers, the people, in their pursuit to create conditions of confinement, to stop any voice of protest that demanded solutions and demands to strengthen the public health system, the subordination of the private sector to public needs and the creation of health care structures of intensive care. This whole period has been a particularly dramatic ordeal for workers, pensioners and the grassroots of society. Millions of people of the working class lost their lives or were left with severe health problems which shows that within capitalism even health problems, despite the achievements of science, cannot be used for the benefit of man by any management. However, despite the bans and repressive measures, they have not been

able to silence the class workers, people, trade union movement, prevent it from developing important struggles along with the health workers in many countries in the world.

The economic and social contradictions, the rivalries of the imperialists are intensifying, impoverishing the people and putting world peace in new dangers.

Today the modern capitalist world is plagued by enormous contradictions, conflicts, wars, poverty, insecurity. Inequalities between countries are growing. The attack of the capital, political parties, governments - no matter how they politically self-identify and preach that they manage to serve the people's needs, has become the decisive element in its deadly growth, which is the cause of the suffering experienced by people all over the world.

All the evidence shows that for the working class and the lower social classes the situation is going from bad to worse, since the political leaders of the exploitative system are making the development of society based on the needs of the capital. The propaganda campaign of the capitalists that after the counter-revolutionary upheavals in the Soviet Union and in the countries of socialism (the empire of evil as they called it), that the world would live in prosperity and peace, has, as was certain, has fallen into a vacuum, has been belied by developments, since today, thirty-four years after the counter-revolutionary upheavals, the reality for the peoples of the whole world is extremely dramatic and the future is uncertain.

All these years have seen the exploitation of the workers take off, rights and gains in wages and salaries are being smashed, working hours are being increased, and there is no end to the exploitation of the workers. Pensionable earnings and the social benefits won have been dramatically reduced. The greatest conquest of the 20th century, social security, is being handed over to the profitability of the capital with a dramatic increase in the retirement ages of men and women, with the destruction of pensionable earnings, of social security rights. Public health structures are being closed, shut down or shrunk and privatized with thousands of redundancies of doctors and nurses. A similar approach is being taken regarding the availability of medicines and the existence of public networks of nursing homes.

Privatization and the brutal exploitation of enterprises producing social goods in energy, water supply and public transport. Free public education is being downgraded in favor of private companies and the structures from pre-school to university and post-graduate education are being handed over to their profitability.

The land, beaches, mountain ranges, virgin forests, are handed over to the interests of the exploiters, who have imposed a no-go regime if one does not pay enough money to access them. In the same logic and direction, sport is developing, especially certain popular sports, which have for years been subjected to the profit motive of business groups, creating private armies of fanatical fans through violence, conflicts and profitable games that yield huge profits. They put culture in the same logic by degrading it through vulgar programs adapted to the needs of the subculture of the exploitative nature of the system.



The prices of popular consumer goods, of energy are constantly rising, inflation is taking off, while the real producers of wealth, the workers, are forced to make dramatic reductions in their wages.

Taxation for the working class is becoming unbearable, at a time when the capitalist states are using this money to further strengthen the business groups, their growth and profitability, and not to satisfy the people's social needs. At the same time, all civil protection services, the needs for firefighting, flood and earthquake protection are being downgraded. Necessary projects in these sectors are not eligible except those that bring profits to the business groups. At the same time, the invocation of climate change by governments is an attempt to justify the consequences of natural disasters, which, in a cost-benefit logic, deny the allocation of funds for disaster prevention and response, strengthening mechanisms with technological and human resources. The aim is to further commercialize the land and its natural resources.

Authoritarianism has grown everywhere, police brutality, anti-labor legislation and obstacles to the action of the labor movement, to the organization of its struggles and strikes are being strengthened. Everywhere they create huge propaganda mechanisms with recruited paid propagandists, whose aim is to slander the struggling workers' and people's movement. At the same time, they create and organize fascist, racist groups and parties that turn against the organized class workers' and people's movement and its demands. An important role in this campaign and a helping hand to the aspirations of the exploitative system is given by the governmental, employers' trade unionism, the so-called yellow trade unions.

The enormous inequalities of capitalist development between countries and imperialist rivalries create insurmountable problems of poverty, conflicts, wars that feed the migratory flows to the developed capitalist countries, where poverty also takes on enormous proportions. The unequal distribution of global wealth has further widened after the international synchronized capitalist crisis. Wealth is increasingly concentrated in fewer hands.

The effects of these class inequalities are also reflected in the lack of access of millions of people to food or adequate food, clean water, sanitation, free medical and pharmaceutical care, electricity and decent housing. One billion people are recorded as chronically undernourished, and 4 million children die of hunger every year.

Child labor, the mafia and cartels of drugs, prostitution, pimping, corruption, illegal adoptions, trafficking in infants, human organs, and more are its own creations. Ultimately, there is no problem whose basis is not capitalist growth and its profitability. So, our movement is not a movement without a compass but a movement with anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist characteristics and goals.

One of the most tragic problems that the people have experienced over the years is imperialist wars. In all these years since the period of overthrow in the USSR and other socialist countries, humanity has known the most destructive wars and conflicts all over the world

such as: in Iraq, Syria, Yugoslavia, Palestine by the murdering state Israel and its NATO allies, conflicts on all continents and now one of the most destructive ones between Russia and Ukraine after the attack of the former against the latter. War between peoples who have lived and created together wonders for their prosperity with a huge positive effect between the workers and peoples of the whole world. This war is a huge threat to peace throughout the world, since it is ultimately developing into a war between Russia and NATO, with the assistance of the reactionary government of Ukraine. But as has been proven, imperialist peace is a gun-to-the-head process in every country until a new war is created.

These are the gifts of the domination of the capitalists throughout the world, on the one hand poverty, misery, exploitation for the workers and peoples, the real producers of wealth, with a huge concentration of super-profits on the other hand for them. This society and its development cannot have a future. The society that will abolish exploitation, where the real producer of wealth becomes its master and satisfies its needs, in terms of objective conditions, is at the door. The preparation of the subjective factor is also our affair.

The situation in the world will get worse as the elements of further aggravation are determined by:

- ▶ The strengthening of China in relation to the US and the Eurozone, in terms of their shares of the World Gross Product. As a result of this, China's competition with the USA is intensifying, and the latter still retains its leading position, despite a downward trend in its share.
- ▶ The continuation of the slowdown in the rate of growth which is creating a new recession in the international capitalist economy, which has been developing in recent years, with no imperialist center foreseen to take the lead in increasing its rate of growth. This has nothing to do with the pandemic that has arisen, since the elements of the recession predate the pandemic and continue after it.
- ▶ The great magnitude of the over-accumulation of capital and the impossibility of its controlled depreciation in a satisfactory manner by the bourgeois governments in all imperialist centers.
- ▶ The sharpening of the basic contradiction, with the strengthening of the tendency of absolute and relative impoverishment of the working class first of all in the most developed capitalist economies, with the increase in the degree of exploitation, with new armies of poverty, destitution, unemployment.
- ▶ The effect of uneven development between the different member states of transnational imperialist alliances such as the EU.

Generally, developments confirm that the objective tendency to internationalize the movement of the capital in the context of the capitalist market cannot undo the effect of the law of uneven growth.



The conditions for the expanded reproduction of the capital by the monopoly groups, the joint-stock companies, continue for the most part to be shaped within the framework of the nation-states and the transnational imperialist alliances in which they participate. The national bourgeois state remains the main instrument for ensuring the economic domination of the capital, the monopolies, the concentration and centralization of the capital in competition with similar processes and aspirations in other states. It remains a powerful field of the unremitting class struggle between labor and the capital.

Based on the above contradictory movement of the capitalist economy, the intra-imperialist contradictions and the intra-bourgeois struggle within each bourgeois state are intensified.

In the current period, the bourgeois current of nationalism and protectionism in the economy is temporarily strengthening.

The intervention of bourgeois politics to halt a significant capital depreciation is delaying the entry into a phase of dynamic capitalist recovery and increasing the deadlocks of the bourgeois political system.

It is necessary from our side in our struggle to fight as a whole and firmly against both bourgeois nationalism and the cosmopolitanism of capital, which are the two sides of the ideology of the ruling class, in favor of the international unity of the working class and its movement.

The working class and its movement in all countries must prepare for the possibility of a more generalized imperialist war. The war that is unfolding (as we have already mentioned) between Russia and Ukraine and has effectively turned into a NATO war with Russia, the alliances and contradictions that are being created, is a global threat.

The acute intra-imperialist antagonisms and the great antagonisms of powerful capitalist states and interests lead today to continuous rearrangements of alliances, to continuous phenomena of the creation of axes and counter-axes internationally.

This situation has led not only to an increase in military expenditure, but also to rearrangements between capitalist states, in terms of military power, with the use of the army as a guardian of the borders (with the Euroarmy under construction) against the flows of migrants. Huge military forces of the imperialists are being deployed all over the world to protect the interests of their business groups, but also to create new conditions for grabbing new sources of wealth, for expanding their activities.

Thus, in addition to annual military expenditure, military power refers to the conquered over time size of military forces, technological superiority, the existence of bases outside the borders combined with control of territories of strategic importance, superiority in intelligence gathering, the ability to wage unorthodox warfare.

Nuclear and biological weapons are of great importance in today's world. The states that possess nuclear weapons are the USA, Russia, China, India, Britain, France, Israel, Pakistan, North Korea, France and India.

However, even among these nuclear powers there are huge differences, since the US and Russia stand out among them in terms of capabilities. Russia is potentially the only military power that can respond to the US in the event of a nuclear strike, causing devastating destruction. It is thought that this risk acts as a deterrent to the use of nuclear weapons.

However, it has been proven historically that in the event of an intensification of intra-imperialist competition and its escalation into a military conflict, capitalist states do not even hesitate to use such weapons. All in all, war is an inherent phenomenon of capitalism, as well as of every exploitative society. The imperialist «peace» prepares the way for new imperialist wars. The cause of world peace is a basic issue of the struggle of peoples all over the world. It is a question that must be at the forefront of the demands of the U.T. and its trade unions and the trade unions of the pensioners, who from their age have themselves experienced bloody wars in many parts of the world.

On this altar the imperialists all over the world spend trillions of dollars on armaments that would satisfy the needs of the people in health, education, culture, housing, welfare structures, public housing, free transport, etc.

To make it clear that the class labor and trade union movement, representing the interests of the working class, of the peoples, has nothing to do with defending the projects of one imperialist pole or another, the profitability of one monopoly group or another. It is necessary to oppose more resolutely the various warlike nationalist cries and the creation of a climate of hostility of one people towards another. To draw a line of struggle in defense of peace that does not detract the defense of borders and sovereign rights - from the point of view of the working class and the popular strata - from the struggle to overthrow the power of capital in each country.

Political-military alliances and confrontations are expanding and giving rise to new oppositions, new claims and contradictions.

In this direction each bourgeoisie seeks to increase its power through political-military alliances. NATO continues to be the strongest political-military alliance, despite the sharpening of the contradictions within it and the emerging trend towards the formation of a self-sufficient military apparatus of the EU.

Moreover, both the military confrontations in Europe, Russia and Ukraine, and the strengthening of NATO in the Baltic, Black Sea and the Balkans are factors that argue in favor of the possible outbreak of military confrontations again on European soil.

Beyond NATO, however, other political-military alliances have also emerged (Shanghai Cooperation Organization, Collective Security Treaty Organization, etc.)

At the same time, in a number of regions, such as Latin America and Africa, political - economic alliances are being formed, linked inter alia to specific political - military choices and partnerships, e.g. with the EU. Also, individual states in Latin America (such as Colom-



bia, Peru, Chile, Mexico) and elsewhere (such as Australia) are being integrated into the general plan to promote NATO «partnerships».

In recent years, mercenary armies, i.e. private military operations, which under various pretexts (e.g. piracy, drug trafficking, military training, «terrorism»), have been growing significantly. Multinational armies in African countries to grab their wealth. Armies undertaking missions in dozens of war zones as emissaries of capitalist states.

Interesting also are the rearrangements in the BRICS group with the enlargement of the group with 6 more states and others waiting to be admitted, but also with the confrontations within the group, especially with the India-China confrontation.

The object of military confrontations is:

- ▶ The control of energy deposits and routes for the transport of energy resources (e.g. oil, gas, pipelines).
- ▶ Control of land and sea freight corridors.
- ▶ The control of underground wealth in the Arctic zone, mineral wealth, rare earths, and water reserves.
- ▶ The exploitation of space for military purposes.
- ▶ The struggle for market shares, in which military means are used not only to conquer new market shares, but also to reduce the shares of competitors.
- ▶ The destruction of infrastructure as a means of domination.

Of course, alongside the fierce competition for monopoly profits, there are also evolving attempts at compromise, agreements, temporary suspension of any generalization of the confrontation, and even a rearrangement of alliances, as developments within the Euro-Atlantic «camp» itself show.

The repressive mechanisms against the working people's movement are being upgraded and modernized.

The debate at the level of the EU and every bourgeois state is intensified in relation to the so-called «new doctrine of security of states». «Security» is presented as the number one issue for the states of the European Union.

Behind various pretexts lie the aspirations of the bourgeoisie at home (prevention of a possible intensification of the class struggle) and abroad (defence of the interests of the EU and its member states through more active intervention in international conflicts). It is characteristic that the German «White Bible on Security» directly links the issue of internal security to Germany's pursuit of strengthening its military role internationally, which has acquired an army like Japan.

These mechanisms and tendencies serve the goal of further armoring the bourgeois states against the backdrop of intensifying intra-imperialist conflicts and the possibility of involvement in more generalized conflicts. At the same time, they aim to control the working-people's strata, to restrict people's freedoms and rights through further militarization and reactionarisation.

The example of Cuba is typical, where for many years and today the imperialist blockade against this country is turning into an unprecedented genocide against its people who wish to work and live under the social, political and economic system of their own choosing. Our solidarity with this country must be a component of our struggle.

The capitalists have at their service the international capitalist mechanisms that play an important, decisive, guiding role in the strategic objectives of capital. This role is played by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the World Bank and other organisations. The same auxiliary role is played by the International Labour Office for capitalism, aided by the employers' government trade unionism, the yellow unions who are the only ones in its leadership and who have become rich for their services to the capitalists.

The class trade union movement is the only force that must confront this expanding network of repressive and surveillance mechanisms as well as the role and aspirations of the transnational organisations of the capital by strengthening the coordinated class struggle at the regional and international level.

Action against the consequences of the capitalist crisis and imperialist wars is necessary to eradicate the causes that prevent people from living in dignity and security and becoming landlords in their own country and must be a key element of the struggle of the pensioners' movement.

The situation of the working class is worsened by capital's attack on its rights and gains.

The measures that led to major reversals in labour relations, wages, collective agreements, working hours, pensions, social benefits, etc., were planned long before the capitalist crisis. In the countries of Europe, the Maastricht Treaty gave the direction from the beginning of the 1990s. These capitalist restructurings and the related anti-worker reforms served the objective of facilitating capitalist profitability against the background of intensifying international competition. Nevertheless, their urgency for the capitalist system is understood to increase in times of crisis.

This strategic planning has been pursued in a targeted, methodical and long-term manner by bourgeois governments in every country.

On this basis they are promoted:

A unified policy for a drastic reduction of wages and salaries and the promotion of alternative and part-time forms of employment.



The abolition of fixed daily working hours, permanent employment in the state-public sector and relatively more stable work in the private sector; generalised changes in labour relations, with a strengthening of flexibility.

These are policies that are part of the strategy of liberalising the labour market in the long term and of the tendency to adjust labour wages and salaries to the very low levels prevailing on the international capitalist market.

A unified policy for the contraction of health and social benefits and, above all, for the Social Security systems, with the extension of privatisation, the increase in retirement thresholds with reduced pay.

New restrictions on the right to strike, to trade union action.

Steady increase in indirect taxation, resulting in increases in popular consumer goods (e.g. electricity, food, transport, etc.).

Passing a series of authoritarian laws repressing and banning gatherings, demonstrations.

A number of elements confirm the trend of strengthening the absolute impoverishment of the working class. Apart from the wage cuts, this drastic reduction in the total remuneration of dependent labour naturally reflects the soaring unemployment in the period of the crisis.

The manifestation of the new deep international economic crisis and the obvious weakness of the public health systems in dealing with the pandemic in the imperialist centres show the real character and limits of the capitalist system, despite its domination after the victory of the counter-revolution of the 20th century.

The consequences are very big for the working class, pensioners and the popular strata in all aspects of their lives and, above all, in the protection of their health.

The initial bourgeois assurances and reassuring statements by bourgeois staffs and governments about a short and rapid recovery from the crisis are being contradicted.

Of course the pandemic played a role in the timing and depth of the crisis, but it is not the cause of the crisis.

The laws of recent years throughout the capitalist world by bourgeois governments continue to continuously deteriorate wages, pensions and people's income, the life of the working family

The strengthening of the pensioners' movement requires a better connection with the workers', people's movement.

The basic task of the struggle of the working people's movement, but also of the workers who have a special experience, is through class struggles to raise the consciousness of the subjective factor to the level of the present needs for the overthrow of the rotten capitalist

system. To escape the working class, the popular strata from supporting alternative forms of government by alternating between different parties, regardless of how they express themselves or self-identify as right-wing, socialist, social democratic, left-wing, etc., confusing any differences and their declarations, which do not escape the management of the capitalist system and its strategic objectives, trapping the workers in its own needs.

It is clear that both the working class and the popular strata, the working class and the working class defenders will not be effective in their struggle to assert their just demands if they do not have a class framework of claims and alliances among themselves and, moreover, a clear view of the capitalists' field of action, their strategy, their capabilities, their weaknesses, their contradictions. In simple words, a united mass militant class front against the class opponent, striking at the weaknesses, omissions, inhibitions and coordination of action that unfortunately exist in our ranks.

In the work of our conference we need to discuss these important elements, which will determine the developments in the world in the coming years and will of course influence our own work, the goals we will set and the development of our action.

Today, the very course of the movement, the development of the struggles, the struggle for the reorganization of the trade union movement and the promotion of the social alliance with the social strata affected by the policies imposed by the big business conglomerates become crucial.

The issues we have to face, especially within the workers', pensioners' and people's movement, are to a certain extent in a new phase, as already mentioned in the chapter on domestic and international political and economic developments. The picture of total retreat, of folding, of generalised insecurity, of fatalism, of fear is well known; we encounter it in our contacts with the masses.

Nevertheless, there are new pockets of resistance, struggles are developing all over the world. The main conclusion is that there are possibilities, although all the objective and subjective difficulties remain.

Despite the fact that it is irreplaceable to work on developing struggles on individual fronts of struggle, dealing with all the small and big problems of pensioners, regardless of their professional background, is necessary.

The trade unions (which in some countries are associations of pensioners with class positions, either because of their own history or because of the legislation prohibiting unions belonging to the TUI of the WFTU) have the right, but also the obligation, to act so that all pensioners are involved in the organised struggle. The struggle within the trade union movement, the class forces with the forces of the yellow unions, the government trade unionism in an anti-capitalist line is imperative, it helps and facilitates the process of understanding that the real visible enemy for the evils experienced by the popular strata is capitalism. This is how we can give a comprehensive response to the perspective of class struggle.



The basic criterion of our work must be to maintain militant links with those who want to resist, regardless of the current level of understanding and acceptance of all our positions. This of course does not mean retreating from the task of highlighting the real causes of the problems, of pointing out the direction of their solution in a well-founded and specific way, which is de facto in an anti-monopoly - anti-capitalist direction.

It is no coincidence that along with the economic war for the increase of exploitation, the political and ideological war for the division, manipulation, disorientation and entrapment of the working and popular masses is developing and growing stronger at the same time.

The forces of the yellow trade unions (with strong financial support and personal enrichment) contribute to the entrapment of the working and popular masses in views convenient to the system, with the main vehicle being the concept of class cooperation, the denial of class solidarity and unity. Theories that argue that there is also a healthy capitalist system and therefore, with a better mix of politics, things can be fixed.

It is of particular importance today to reveal the character of modern reformism, the main agent of which are the forces of opportunism within the trade union movement. Today, the reformist line in the trade union movement has more openly the character of a proposal for the management of the system, while incorporating demands and objectives of struggle that are fully integrated into the strategy of capital. For example, the content of the slogan of productive reconstruction, put forward in the context of the various transition programmes, is in fact identical with the objective of capitalist recovery and the change of the productive model, despite the fact that it is camouflaged by apparently radical slogans and demands (such as direct democracy, etc.). These are objectives of struggle in the movement which - through their inclusion in various transition programmes and other kinds of ostensibly direct political proposals - are exploited to trap them in various versions of bourgeois politics and in the line of governmentalism.

Our confrontation with this line in the movement is therefore a confrontation with the demands, the goals, the very direction of the struggle. The elaboration of each line must have those elements of stability and flexibility that facilitate the disengagement of radical forces that are drifting and trapped in various managerial proposals.

In this ideological political battle, the class trade unionists and organisations, which in the pensioners' movement have experience of such situations, must take the lead.

The need to form a unified understanding of the content of the organisation of the class pensioners' trade union movement

It is necessary to establish the understanding that, as we have already mentioned, the problems of the life of pensioners all over the world, however much they form the basis of the struggles which must be developed unceasingly with the pioneering contribution of class trade unionists, do not in themselves lead to the development of class political consciousness. From here derive the tasks of the ideological-political struggle of the class trade unionists within the movement to strengthen its anti-capitalist-anti-imperialist direc-

tion. These tasks include the elaboration of demands for struggle and the choice of forms of organisation and alliance with popular forces first and foremost with the working class, and presuppose a good knowledge of the situation of the pensioners, but also of the new mechanisms and methods of manipulation by the bourgeoisie, which does not give up the integration of the workers' movement of the popular movement in its own strategic choice.

It requires daily friction and training, concern and care from our leadership bodies, so that the initiative, the daily action, can rise. Orientation and creative control is required to form a clear knowledge of developments. It requires daily and tireless individual work, so that daily links with our members are formed even in times when no immediate visible results are seen, which will lead under certain conditions to a rise in the prestige and influence of our class unions, but will also help in building new unions in each country.

We need to acquire a firm orientation but also a greater capacity to strengthen from below - starting from the union itself, the place of residence of the pensioners - the line of struggle that puts the recovery of losses at the centre, in combination with the modern needs of working-people families. To become skilled in projecting the fact that the obstacle to meeting contemporary needs and the demands that express them is capitalist property and capitalist profit itself. Ability to reveal convincingly - through the struggle that will develop in the small and larger struggles - the mechanisms of exploitation and, above all, the conditions for their abolition.

Ability of class trade unionists to work with purpose, plan and continuity within the pensioner world, to help organise and rally, to enlighten in order to radicalise their consciousness, to raise their demandingness and militancy for the satisfaction of their modern needs.

It is an objective tendency for modern needs to increase. This is due to the modern level of development of productive forces, the rise in productivity, the achievements of science and their applications in all sectors (health, education, people with disabilities, etc.). They also concern factors relating to living standards, such as the quality and quantity of food, housing and working conditions, the role of physical education and exercise, health with an emphasis on prevention, the management of environmental problems and occupational diseases, the increase in life expectancy, culture, etc. They also concern the infrastructure and resources needed to meet them.

Our difference with the yellow unions is not only in the quantity and quality of the public and free social services provided, but goes deeper, touching on the very organisation and content of these services. Thus, for example, in health we demand not only better and free health services, but the priority of prevention and early rehabilitation, or in education not only public and free books at all levels of education, but primarily radically different content of these books, radically different methods and forms of teaching with the aim of the all-round education of children.

In all of this together, as a whole, lies the essence of our conception of contemporary popular needs, knowing of course that despite the fact that from today they must be the object of claim, their full satisfaction does not «fit» within the framework of capitalism, but



presupposes the socialisation of the centralised means of production and their integration into the scientific central planning of production.

That today a struggle is needed, even for the minimum, linked to the more general struggle, the confrontation with the strategy of capital.

Strengthening our ideological intervention on the women's question as a key element of women's participation in the pensioners' unions

If we look at the problems of women as a whole, we will notice that in the last 25 years there has been an increasing deterioration in the support of motherhood by the state, the intensification of work, unstable working hours, unemployment and in general the factors that worsen the position of the working woman and the young woman. Capitalism and the transnational - imperialist associations, in the name of equal treatment of men and women and the «mixing of family and professional responsibilities», have promoted and continue to promote anti-people, anti-working-class measures aimed at removing conquests and increasing the degree of exploitation for both sexes. Throughout the capitalist world, all governments, under the responsibility of all governments, have used «gender equality» to abolish positive regulations in favour of women, e.g. equal retirement age for women and men, abolition of the ban on night work for women, etc. The racial dimension of the women's issue is not only about discrimination against women in the context of exploitative society, but also about the specific social needs of women because of their reproductive role.

Under capitalism, the woman's relationship with motherhood is exploited to promote reactionary agendas. For example, it is used as a vehicle for attracting women to short-term and poorly paid work programmes, to forms of volunteering that substitute for state responsibility for social services and family support infrastructures (especially for children, the elderly, the disabled, i.e. health, welfare, education, etc.).

In the same direction, in the next period, an attempt will be made to integrate women (unemployed, semi-unemployed) into the sector of the «social and solidarity economy» in terms of intensifying the degree of exploitation and manipulation.

At the same time, the prevailing view is that the education and all-round development of the child is the individual responsibility of the woman, a «family responsibility». The problem of lack of free time is exacerbated, with negative consequences for information, study and the decision to join the organised class struggle.

It becomes even more urgent the need for specialized action by our trade unions on women of working-class, popular affiliation or origin both independently and through the ranks of the working-class, popular movement with the aim of increasing women's participation. The key is to strengthen women's participation and initiative in our movement.

At the same time, efforts to increase women's participation require an intensification of the struggle with modern forms of women's manipulation through bourgeois, petty-bourgeois and opportunist views on the causes of women's oppression, i.e. modernised theo-

ries of «patriarchal society», «modern masculinity», and new anti-scientific theories of «social gender».

These theories are expressed in the calls of bourgeois politics and its agents (even in the trade union movement) for the necessity of increasing women's participation in a series of institutions, without any reference to class characteristics, presenting this participation narrowly as an element of competition between men and women. In particular, they present the promotion of women to the management of companies, groups and institutional centres as an element of gender equality. They propose a quota for women's participation in «decision-making centres» as a measure. In practice, for the majority of working-class and grass-roots women, the right to «vote» remains largely formal or, better still, under the manipulation of capitalist power. Let it be clear that the class trade union movement is steadfastly fighting to eliminate discrimination against women in all their rights.

Dear colleagues of our 3rd Congress. Dear guests.

All these years, the efforts and the action we have developed in our countries, as trade unionists of the labour movement and members of the WFTU, then as members of the pensioners' movement at the national level before the creation of the WFTU of pensioners and now having the experience and the action of the global movement of pensioners give us the opportunity to multiply the steps we have taken, as the difficult times we live in require.

The exploitative system in which we live and develop our struggle is not eternal and invincible. Its very growth, driven by the profits of the business groups, is not its advantage, as its political managers and capitalists proclaim, but its fundamental weakness, its deadlocks, its destruction.

But this cannot be done only by its objective difficulties and contradictions, if those who suffer its destructive consequences do not rise up, and these are and cannot be but the real producers of wealth, the working class, the workers, the popular strata of society, all those who have an interest in changing the future of society and in living in a social system with socialized means of production without the productive, ethnic, racial discriminations and wars that breeds the exploitation of man by man.

For our part, having all this experience now, as fighters of work but not of struggle and life, we must put our own stone in this struggle with all our strength, overcoming any difficulties and problems we encounter in the organization of our struggle. Through the process of our congress we thoroughly discuss the content and direction of our action, how to create the conditions for the mass participation of pensioners in each country in the ranks of the congress and how to contribute to a more stable cooperation with the workers and people's movement.

From our 3rd Congress we send our militant comradeship greetings and a message of optimism to the world working class. To our colleagues of the world class movement. To



our fellow cadres of our global trade union federation the WFTU. To our fellow pensioners and trade unionists in every country who are struggling and to those who are fighting for a society that will write on its banner the abolition of the exploitation of man by man.

Athens 5/11/23

Dimos Koumpouris



3rd CONGRESS OF THE WFTU TUI P&R

April 15-16, 2024 - Athens



***Let's strengthen
the International pensioners'
organization of the WFTU***

