# **8th TRILATERAL MEETING**

**15-17 DECEMBER 2017**

**Izmir – Turkey**

**Cyprus Peace Council contribution by Stelios Sofocli, President**

Dear friends, comrades and fellow fighters for peace in the world,

First of all I would like to thank our fellow militants from peace Committee of Turkey for hosting the 8th trilateral meeting of the peace movements of Turkey, Greece and Cyprus under the auspices of the World Peace Council. Special thanks to the friends from Izmir and other members of the Peace Committee of Turkey for the warm welcome and hospitality. We thank you for helping to keep this institution alive.

We, at the Cyprus Peace Council, highly evaluate these meetings, especially at the last congress from CPC in Nicosia and the first meeting of the General Council of CPC, for many reasons. They give us the opportunity to exchange information and experience and thus upgrade our work and actions at national level and they help us to improve the coordination of our actions on the international level.

Taking into account our history, the hostility between our countries and even our people, these meetings serve as an example of how peace movements can resist to the plans of invasions, separation and wars. They can booster up hope that a new world is possible, a world of peace and social justice.

The time elapsed between the last trilateral meeting in Thessaloniki and this one is characterized by an intensification of imperialist aggressiveness all around the world but especially in our neighborhood.

The region from Caucasus to Ukraine, through Balkans to Eastern Mediterranean, to Middle East and from there to North Africa is rich in gas, oil, pipelines and transitional stations and thus it is one of the most desired areas for the imperialists. They were looking for a good pretext to invade to the area – actually they can create a pretext at any time they need one.

The most important example is the region of the middle and far East, where already for several decades the imperialist forces, with the support of the governments of the Gulf States, Turkey, the powerful states of the EU and pioneers of the US imperialists are helping to found a number of extremist organizations and groups in different countries, they support them not only economically but also with military training and equipment, to have always an reason for interventions in order to gain control over the area.

One of the last actions was founding the ISIS as the big counterweight towards Syria and the other countries in the region. Ultimate and only reason is the control of energy resources and of transport routes in the region. The war and the extermination of the people in Yemen have no other reasons than the control of these routes. In this dirty war, which the Saudi regime is fighting with the support of the United States of America, the European Union pretends to fear for the women and children who are being killed daily or passing away because of starving or other diseases, but in the same time continually they are exporting arms to this country.

The war in Iraq and Syria seems to go towards the end, the huge problems, disasters, deaths and refugees remain to remind us of one of the greatest crimes of humanity's modern history.

We witness every day the drama of hundreds of thousands of refugees, victims of those imperialist wars and interventions. The hypocrisy of EU and all of its governments is boundless. They force people to leave their countries and then hypocritically talk about the drama of those drowning in the Mediterranean Sea. At the same time a number of Countries close their borders and leaving them trapped in refugee camps. These people are forced by violence to leave their homelands and become not just homeless refugees but also an endless cheap labor force to be exploited by the so called civilized world.

There is a big field for cooperation and coordination of action for our three organizations, since our countries are receiving big numbers of refugees and unfortunately often are the place of death for many of them.

As a victims of imperialism and a people divided and under occupation we could not refer as always do to the Palestinian issue. In Palestine the violence of the occupation is intensified. The US convergent decision to transfer their embassy to Jerusalem pours fuel on the very fragile region and harms undermines all the efforts of the international community, but also of the two people, for a peaceful solution to the problem. We call on the US Government to reconsider and annul this erroneous and provocative decision. We strengthen our solidarity with the Palestinian People in their struggle for the recognition of an independent and sovereign state of Palestine on the 4th of June 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital and the liberation of political prisoners from Israeli jails and the implementation of decision 194 of the UN on the right of Palestinian refugees to return. On the same time we express our solidarity to our comrades in Israel that stand by the Palestinian people in their just struggle.

Recent developments in Turkey are terrifying and it’s important to keep an open line with our comrades of the Peace Association of Turkey for a continuous briefing since what is happening in Turkey is influencing the whole region. We stand in solidarity with our Turkish comrades of the Peace Association in their struggle for restoring democratic normality in Turkey, for free functioning of political parties and organizations, for restoring press freedom, for rehabilitation of Justice from the Government, for the release of all the political prisoners and the resumption of the talks for a peaceful solution to the Kurdish problem. We are sure that with the international solidarity our Turkish comrades of Peace Association will win.

The 8th trilateral meeting takes place one year after the meeting in Thessaloniki and still the Greek people and the whole country are seriously suffering from the capitalist crisis for 8 years, suffering from attacks on labour rights, suffering from cuttings on pensions, salaries and allowances, suffering from heavy taxations. We express our solidarity to Greek people and especially in the EEDYE and the struggle for exit from NATO and the closure of the U.S. - NATO bases and headquarters personnel in Greece.

Further we state categorically our opposition to the plans of the Greek Government in collaboration with the American imperialists and ΝΑΤΟ for upgrading the facilities at the NATO base in Crete and the granting of new military bases in the Aegean. We are ready to stand on their side on their struggle for a better life.

We want to take advantage this meeting and condemn the Government of our Country Cyprus which in close cooperation with imperialist powers, Egypt, Jordan and Greece is providing land, air and sea to the imperialists to implement their criminal destructive plans in the region of Eastern Mediterranean and Middle East. At the same time where the President of Cyprus Nicos Anastasiades surpassingly discuss for a solution in the Cyprus issue and demilitarization of Cyprus, him and his Government militarize the international relations of Cyprus and tangled the people of Cyprus into dangerous military and imperialist plans. Recently right wing Anastasiades has engaged Cyprus into more troubles and dangers by entering Cyprus in the Dark Military EU Alliance with the name PESKO, a clearly offensive mechanism that for sure will be aiming the peoples of Europe, Middle East, Africa and of course also progressive movements within EU. After all they do not hide their goals. More money to military expenses, coordination and common reaction to the challenges arise in Eastern Mediterranean, Middle East and North Africa, as they directly or indirectly say.

The Cyprus Peace Council denounces the conduct of a military exercise between the Republic of Cyprus and Israel which took place at 7th December. The CPC considers that military exercises are part of the wider imperialist plans in our region, which is oppressed by NATO and its European member countries.

Really my friends, how up to day is the slogan we used to shout in our rallies that EU and NATO are the same Syndicate. When we take into account Memorandums, PESKO, the EU policy in Refugees issue is not enough to just put as a goal the disassemble of NATO and also the disassemble of EU.

Dear comrades,

Our country, Cyprus remains for 43 years divided, with 37% of our land under Turkish occupation. Cyprus issue is an issue of invasion and occupation with international aspect. For us, permanent division of our country is a catastrophe and not an option. So despite the difficulties, we will be carrying on struggling without having of course illusions about the possibilities of a really just solution in today’s conditions under the specific correlation of political and ideological forces. Cyprus is a great bargain for Turkey and hence for NATO. Negotiations have come to a dead end but we are not discouraged. On the contrary, we get more militant and with the international solidarity, united both Turkish and Greek Cypriots; we will not accept the games of the superpowers that desire a piece of us as they always have, we will fight the real enemy of our country which is Imperialism. The 180 km of division can be characterised as a slow burning bomb that we must deactivate. We will keep fighting and supporting a negotiation process towards a right, viable and workable solution. We dream, fight and aim for a **Bizonal, Bicomunal** Federal reunited Cyprus that will have a single Sovereignty, single citizenship, and single international representation. The solution we fight for is based and is defined in UN resolutions for Cyprus and in the highest level agreements of 1977 and 1979. We fight for a solution that will truly reunite the lands and the economy of Cyprus and all the people of Cyprus and can be reached outside suffocating deadlines and will set Cyprus free from custodians and Guarantors.

In this struggle, initiatives like the Institution we set 8 years ago, of the Trilateral Meetings between EEDYE, PEACE ASSOCIATION of TURKEY and CPC undermine the plans of our enemies because they strengthen the friendship amongst our people, improve the coordination of our struggle and enhance it.

Dear comrades our one way road is the one that leads to the defeat of imperialism. To do so we must strengthen our peace movements, recruit more peace loving people, inspire and mobilize more people. This is our debt to history. This is our debt to the future generations. Hand by hand we have to move ahead and carry on the hard, though good struggle to overthrow imperialism. And we must not do even one step back from this duty!

Stelios Sofocli

 President of CPC,