

**Speech of Attila Vajnai, member of the Political Secretariat
and Executive Board of the Party of the European Left at the USF 15th Congress
Bratislava 30.05-1.06**

Dear members of Union Syndical Federal, dear comrades,

On behalf of the party of the European Left, I would like first of all to thank you very much for your invitation. We are glad to be here.

My name is Attila Vajnai, I come from Hungary and I am here on behalf of the Party of the European Left, the European party formed in the 2004 and grouping now around 40 parties referring “to the values and traditions of socialism, communism and the labour movement, of feminism, the feminist movement and gender equality, of the environmental movement and sustainable development, of peace and international solidarity, of human rights, humanism and antifascism, of progressive and liberal thinking, both nationally and internationally”.

There is so much to do and to work on to achieve better working conditions everywhere. Especially in these times where precarious jobs have been imposed and therefore instability has unfortunately become part of the life, especially that of young people.

And now we have also to face another huge struggle that is becoming more and more vital all around Europe, the rise of authoritarian nationalisms. Let me ,please, bring at your attention what that would mean, being Hungarian, and already in the middle of this process of genetically change of the society:

The process of rise of nationalism in Hungary has started already after the change of social system. This meant the change of economic and social structure of the whole society with a dramatic drop of living standard.

Loss of 1.5 million jobs, weakening and destruction of trade unions with the consequent missing sense of solidarity, political power against left thinking people, parties and organisations, rise of far-right parties: all these elements shaped a polarised society.

The same processes are already in place in other countries in Central and Eastern Europe.

With this bad situation already in place, in 2008 started the global crisis as well. Austerity, raising of poverty, move of masses from Hungary to Western Europe (700 thousand we lost). And the same we can see happening now in the south of Europe: the periphery moving towards the centre.

Furthermore, as it was not enough, we assisted to the rise of neo-fascist party *Jobbik* with a clear hate policy against roma people. In 2007 they even formed a Hungarian Guard, a Paramilitary organisation to “haunt them”. In 2008 and 2009 a group of far-right activist killed 5 roma people(one 5 year old boy).

As it was not enough, the conditions of the society are worsening in all the aspects.

In 2010 Viktor Orban became prime minister. The measures taken among others were: Change of constitution. Law against free media activities, labour law, capture of Constitutional Court, Centralisation of power.

This has brought to have now an anti-refuge, antisocial, neofascist government.

The danger of neofascism is rising in the whole Europe, is threatening the whole Europe and undermining the project of unite people and a social and democratic Europe, the one that Altiero Spinelli was talking about. We assisted with concern to the last elections results in France, Italy, Belgium, UK, Nordic countries and others.

The hate policy against workers who are coming from other countries, shows that nationalism is a threat for the entire society and for trade unions too.

In front of this situation, we cannot withdraw, we cannot live without fighting, for all the people already facing that, for women - the first who feel on their skin the worsening conditions of the society under authoritarian nationalisms - for workers, for those who have found death in the Mediterranean, and for the social Europe, we have to work and fight for.

We have to unite our forces against this barbaric process.

We have to unite, among political actors, movements, trade unions and this is what we are doing as Party of the European Left since three years together with green and progressive forces in our annual meeting of the European Forum. And we want to invite all progressive forces to build an alternative in Europe. We are participating also in a trade unionists assembly in this context, and we hope to meet other trade unionists also this year in Brussels, in November 8-10.

Thank you again and I wish you all a very successful Congress!