LÍS

Jerúsalem, 3. desember 2017

First of all, we would like to emphasize that this statement is not directed at NUIS or any other NUS in any way. NUIS have been tremendous hosts and executed all organizing and planning impeccably. We thank them for their hard work.

Having voted against this BM being held in Israel we would like to make a statement related to that decision. In Malta, during the BM72, LÍS made a statement which explained the reasons why LÍS voted against the BM being held in Israel at the BM in Gdansk one year ago.

That decision was based on ESU's Human Rights and Solidarity Strategy which says:

"Some of ESU's NUSes are operating in countries with grave human rights violations, discrimination of minority groups and/or conflicts taking place on a daily basis. **While it is important that these NUSes are included in ESU on equal terms and not judged based on their respective government's actions**, ESU should also attempt to avoid hosting statutory events in these countries. ESU should also have as a defining rule that every event should live up to the freedom of speech. **This means that ESU should never be in a situation where any NUS or speaker feels restrained or being held from attending an ESU event due to their beliefs or opinions not being acceptable and safe to express.** Also if the participants have reasoned concerns about their safety, no statutory event can be held in this country as long as this situation persists. It is also ESU's responsibility that all participants at events can act and speak freely within the limits of the Code of Conduct."

It is LÍS's firm belief that ESU should prioritise human rights and freedom of expression above everything else. It is of paramount importance that everyone is capable of participating in the work of ESU and it is a severe fault if anyone is unable to participate or feels restricted to in any way.

Now we would like to emphasise the following:
LÍS is dissatisfied and concerned that when it comes to voting for hosting countries for future events and the Board is only presented with one option, there are no concrete measures to a backup plan in the case of the vote going against. With this statement we wish to raise awareness of that problem, the problem of NUSes feeling pressured to vote in favor of the only option available, because there seems to be no other option. This results in the vote feeling only symbolic rather than the democratic procedure it is supposed to be. This troubles LÍS greatly; it is a disgrace to democracy and disrespectful to the work conducted within ESU in order to construct documents such as the Human Rights and Solidarity Strategy, when they are ignored in situations where they should rightly be followed and implemented. It's also troubling when we face the situation where there are no candidates for hosting events such as the BM76.

We don't have any concrete solutions to this problem. We realise that hosting a BM is a huge financial responsibility and a big task for any NUS and being exposed to different standards

surrounding the events might make the task feel even more impossible for many NUSes.     Keeping that in mind, rethinking the approach would seem reasonable. It is a matter of how ESU approaches its member unions in calling for hosts, how the planning of an event is handled, what is the standard which the unions are supposed to meet regarding the general framework and to what extent they can expect the EC to be collaborating with them regarding the planning of the event. Another approach would be to inform the Board on options regarding event hosting. A collaboration between more than one NUS in hosting an event could enable more NUSes to become hosts. Regardless of the selected solution, ESU needs to make it more desirable to take on the task of hosting events.

It is important and in fact crucial to be aware of this problem and we ask ESU, an organization that promotes inclusion and human rights, to show more responsibility and react accordingly.