

Statement on the Temporary 'Ban' on Some Parties

March 22, 2022



Recently, the Ukrainian National Defense and Security Council decided for the temporary suspension of the activities of a number of Ukrainian political parties. The list includes both major opposition parties and less known ones that use words 'progressive,' 'left,' or 'socialist' in their names. President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelensky accused them of "connections with Russia," but did not back the claim with any proper legal reasoning.

We clearly realize that at least some members of these parties, and particularly their leadership, have

- downplayed the danger of Russian chauvinist ambitions and bordered on justifying the aggression if not directly worked with the Kremlin;
- misdirected popular frustration caused by neoliberal policies of the government into fighting the caricature image of "the West" destroying "Slavic civilization";
- spread xenophobia, antisemitism, homophobia and hatred.

Thus, even those using, but in fact hijacking, left-wing phraseology in reality just served the oligarchic consensus.

Nevertheless, any possible cooperation of the aforementioned organizations, as well as of their individual members, with Russian imperialists has to be investigated, and then tried by a court. Concrete persons involved in sabotage of the popular resistance have to bear individual responsibility for their actions. We recognize the importance and symbolism of democratic freedoms and believe that indiscriminate party bans have no place in today's struggle.

We have already seen how the government tried to abuse the situation of war to attack the labor rights of Ukrainian workers; now its actions are aimed at limiting political and civil freedoms. We cannot support this.

Moreover, we would like to warn against any attempts to stigmatize left and social movements in general by the absurd linking of the progressive agenda to the Kremlin, which actually embodies everything opposite to it. Left and union activists today are fighting the aggressor as members of the military force and territorial defense, as volunteers involved in provision of equipment, food and

medical supplies, evacuation and accommodation of the refugees and IDPs [internally displaced persons], as groups building up international solidarity and demanding the write off of the foreign debt, the seizure of Russian state assets, and an end to the toleration of offshoring.

We can only appreciate the numerous left movements around the world that already voiced their support, recognized Ukraine's right to self-defense, and keep pressuring their governments to take concrete steps.

The people of Ukraine, not the capitalists who always used them to extract value and store it abroad, are bearing immense hardships today, and they deserve a fairer tomorrow. Socialism is the best way to bring more justice in our society and pursue common aims. That is what we, Sotsialnyi Rukh, stand for!

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