



# United Democratic Youth Organization

**Central Council 2019**



## EDON HISTORY AND ORIGINS

The United Democratic Youth Organisation (EDON), is an independent, democratic, mass political and cultural youth organization. EDON is the continuation of the Communist Youth of Cyprus (CYC) and of the Progressive Youth Organisation (AON) and, as such, forms an integral part of the Cypriot Left Movement, thus maintaining close links with it.

The progressive youth movement in Cyprus, since the founding of CYC in 1926, of AON in 1944 and EDON in 1959, has participated in every struggle of the Cypriot people against imperialism, for freedom, democracy and national independence. Whenever the country so requested tens and hundreds of members of AON and EDON sacrificed their own life for the achievement of national liberation and peace.

At the same time, EDON and its predecessors have contributed immensely in the social and political struggles of the working class and peasants, for the furtherance of youth rights at work and in education, as well as for the improvement of living standards in general.

It is for this reason that EDON has become, in the conscience of our people, the youth in particular, the pioneer, mass, democratic youth organization of the Left, which includes in its ranks thousands of young men and women from every corner of Cyprus; workers, peasants, students and pupils.

According to the basic principles of the constitution of EDON, every person aged 14 – 33 can become a member of the Organisation.

## PRINCIPLES AND OBJECTIVES OF EDON

Based on its constitution EDON strives for:

- >The achievement of a better future without economic exploitation and social oppression of the youth.
- >The establishment of a free, independent, sovereign, territorially integral, federal, non – aligned and demilitarised Cyprus where all its inhabitants will live in peace and fraternity, regardless of ethnic origin, religion and language.
- >The cultivation of the youth in the ideals of the Left and of Socialism; the ideals of peace, democracy, social progress, social justice, humanism and international solidarity.
- >The resolution of youth problems at work, in education and at leisure.

For the materialisation of the above mentioned objectives, EDON seeks to achieve unity of action among the Cypriot youth and advocates for rapprochement, friendship and co-operation between the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot Youth.

## EDON STRUCTURE

EDON is constituted and operates on the basis of the following principles:

- (a) The members of EDON express their views freely and participate actively in policy making and implementation.
- (b) All leading bodies, from the Local Committee to the Central Council are elected and become accountable to the aforesaid bodies.
- (c) Critique and self – criticism form an integral part of the Organisation's work and aim to improve control, remedy mistakes, and secure democratic process and adherence to the principles and constitution of the Organisation. Both, critique and self – criticism, take place only within the various bodies of EDON with the sole purpose of strengthening the Organisation.

## FORMS OF ACTION

EDON's activity is multifaceted and is based on the guiding principles and objectives of the Organisation. It includes mobilisations, campaign work, intervention in the work of State and social institutions, exercise of pressure through public statements, various events on a local, district, regional national and international level, etc.

Furthermore, support in the struggle of our people for re – unification and freedom, against the forces of nationalism and chauvinism, as well as respect of the historic truth, is of primary importance to EDON. Tackling serious problems in the social sphere, such as those in education, housing, the environment, social marginalisation, unemployment and problems at work also constitute a priority; particularly at a time when these problems become more and more acute due to the conservative, neo-liberal policies of E.U. and the capitalist system in general.

At the same time, EDON hosts cultural and athletic activities and maintains a large number of cultural groups (music, theatre and dance). EDON organises regional and national festivals, which include concerts, literary reviews and sports tournaments.



## INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

EDON, loyal to the principle of international solidarity, liaises with democratic, left youth organisations worldwide and contributes towards the strengthening of the unity of democratic, progressive, left forces in the struggle against imperialism, racism, neocolonialism, fascism and religious fundamentalism, for the maintenance of world peace, freedom, social progress and Socialism.

EDON is a founding member of the World Federation of Democratic Youth (WFDY) which is the main representative of the global anti-imperialist struggle of the youth. EDON in November 2015, at the 19th Assembly of WFDY was re-elected to the Presidency, taking up high duties with honor and responsibility. President of WFDY is Iacovos Tofari member of the Central Council of EDON.

Drawing from the wide experience of WFDY, EDON was provided with the opportunity of undertaking various initiatives in regard to a wide spectrum of issues such as human rights, education, health unemployment, drugs, the environment, etc. These efforts take the form of lobbying and campaign work at an international level.

EDON will continue to work on strengthening cooperation with international, regional and national youth organizations from around the world aiming for unity of action and international solidarity of all anti-imperialist, progressive and democratic forces to serve the interests of the youth and the needs new to overcome any differences in order to address common problems.



## Panyprian Movement EDONopoula

EDONopoula is the Children's Department of Edon. In our groups involving children aged 6-12 years.

It aims to educate children with human ideals of peace, solidarity, freedom, justice. It has also as main objective the acquaintance and knowledge of the history, struggles and sacrifices of the people's movement but also issues relating to culture, arts, sports, etc.



## Panyprian United Pupils Organisation (PEOM)

PEOM is the Pupil's Department of EDON, and is the pupils syndicalist movement of the Left, which was founded in 1955.

PEOM is the pole of the forces of progress in the Pupils Movement and is struggling for the progressive character of the education system, aiming a democratic school focusing on developing critical thought and creativeness in students.



## Progressive (Proodeftiki) Students Movement



Proodeftiki Students Movement is the left organization in the Cyprus Students Movement. Proodeftiki since its foundation in 1974, is the organization of students which actively expresses its request for the right to education and work. The constant pursuit is a united massive student movement with goals and principles, with requests that are central to the needs of the student. The same time Proodeftiki is the pole of democracy and militancy inside the student movement and expresses the immediate aim of the reunification of Cyprus.

## Young Workers Department

The Department of Young Workers is the newest Department in the organization and it was founded in 2010. The Department is developing initiatives and campaigns about the social difficulties that the young workers are forced to cope with, as the unemployment, the salary reduction, elimination of working rights, the so called flexicurity, the difficulty of securing accommodation, etc.

In cooperation with the class oriented trade unions, EDON is giving the struggle for the right to work, work with rights and the formation of class consciousness.



**Neolea**

"Neolea" is the monthly newspaper of EDON and addressed expressing the concerns, worries, visions of the youth of Cyprus. At the same time conveys the opinions and positions of EDON and People's Movement of the Left to the youth.



## The struggles of Cypriot Youth

Cypriot youth faces very unique situation in their country and struggles. For more than 50 years we face the imperialists attacks and plans of which the Cyprus problem is a result, but at the same time a very strong, popular movement is at a position to organize the wider popular masses against the imperialist plans.

The imperialist plans were initiated from the British to whom the island was a colony. With the divide and rule policy they separated the people in Greek-Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots. The political struggle by AKEL on one site, and the armed struggle by the extreme right wing and the church on the other site created tense in the island between the people. A result was the intervention of Greece and Turkey, bicomunal clashes, and then in 1974 a coup d'etat made by the Greek junta and their local fascist collaborators ΕΟΚΑ Β and immediately after the Turkish invasion. Both events were planned by

NATO. Since then the island and its people

is divided in two parts people live separated for many years, without the ability of communication.



Moreover, the people of Cyprus and especially the youth face the problems created by the capitalist system and its neoliberal expresion. Attacks against the labour rights and interest, undermining of public education and health, unemployment, drugs use, extreme difficulties to buy their own house and start a family are some of the problems that the young people face in Cyprus.

The main opposition to this imperialist plans and neoliberal policies is the wider popular movement. Leading role to this has ΚΚΚ – ΑΚΕΛ (Communist Party of Cyprus – Progressive Party of Working People), ΠΕΟ (Pancyprian Workers Federation), ΕΔΟΝ, ΕΚΑ (Union of Cypriot Farmes), ΠΟΓΟ (Pancyprian Federation of Women Organizations). ΕΔΟΝ, (United Democratic Youth Organization) is

the leading youth organization in Cyprus.

Is organized in local, regional, pan-cyprian and international level. EDON struggles for the reunification of the island, for a just, viable and peaceful solution of the Cyprus problem. For the demilitarization of the island and the peaceful coexistence of the people despite nationality, religion or language difference.



We struggle to educate the youth with the ideas of the left and socialism of peace, solidarity, democracy, equality, social justice and social progress, of humanism and internationalism.

The main directions of EDON struggle in the present time can be orientated in two ways. The first direction is to continue the struggle for solving the Cyprus problem. Cyprus problem is a problem of invasion and occupation of the island by the Turkish army, with hundreds of thousands of refugees from both sides, missing people, and violation of their basic human rights for almost 45 years. The main way to forward this is to continue the policy of rapprochement so that young people of Cyprus understand the need of cooperation, struggle and work together in political, social, labour, economical level so that they will bring solution and peaceful coexistence closer.

The second direction is to be able to intervene on the one hand to face the attacks against the rights of youth and on the other hand to improve the standard of living of the young people and their benefits in aspects of work, health, education and leisure.

We promise that we will continue our struggle for the benefit of the Cyprus youth and people but also for the struggle of all the youth around the globe for a world of peace, solidarity and social justice against imperialism, intolerance and exploitation.





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