

ETUC/FERPA CONFERENCE “EY2012: IMPROVING SOLIDARITY BETWEEN THE GENERATIONS AND ACTIVE AGEING – OVERCOMING OBSTACLES TO OLDER PEOPLE REMAINING IN WORK AND FACILITATING ACCESS TO THE JOB MARKET FOR YOUNGER PEOPLE” LARNACA, 4 OCTOBER 2012

ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF SPEECH OF MR ARSLAN BICAKLI, PRESIDENT OF TÜRK-SEN

Dear Colleagues and Participants,

First of all I would like to convey to you the greetings of Türk-Sen, and the expressions of their respect and solidarity, as well those of my own.

I am very happy for the opportunity of attending this Seminar on “Improving solidarity between generations and Active Ageing, in order to overcome the obstacles older people must face if they keep working, as well as to facilitate access to the labour market for young people”. This Seminar is led by our parent trade union, ETUC, with which we have built strong ties of solidarity during this year.

As you well know, when employees try to create relationships with employers and government agencies in order to further their economic and social rights, they need the support of a strong, knowledgeable, intelligent and active organization to support them. Such an organization is a trade union.

Türk-Sen supports the continued research that promotes intergenerational solidarity, and also encourages the Cyprus Turkish Trade Unions to increase their social reach-out activities using international communication channels. Because of our principles, Türk-Sen is committed to the protection of the rights and freedom of all workers, including those of the workers that belong to the two communities of this Island, within the framework of European and universal principles and in the light of international rules and regulations of a level-playing field.

In a world in continuous development and changing situations, the issue of creating awareness towards improving solidarity between generations and active ageing, as well as overcoming obstacles to older people that choose to continue working while at the same time facilitating access to the labour market for younger people, Türk-Sen promotes a permanent negotiation process geared towards providing fair and sustainable social security for all workers, and struggles to protect their freedoms and rights.

Türk-Sen will continue working during the bilateral negotiation process, in order to reach a solution that can be applied without any discrimination, and which will not depend on

ethnicity or religion; rather, the idea is that workers may chose their employer by their own free will, including their income and employment conditions.

In line with these principles, Türk-Sen participated in the “Forum for all the Trade Unions of Cyprus”, a few years ago, the common ground forum generated by the Türk Cypriot and Greet Cypriot trade unions, and had an active role in advocating their common interests. Furthermore, Türk-Sen will strive to transfer the experiences of developed countries to both Cypriot communities, following its principles of international solidarity.

In conclusion, Türk-Sen supports negotiations between both communities in Cyprus, with the aim to reach fair and acceptable solutions for them. In the process of accession to the EU, Türk-Sen will be ready to raise awareness within the Turkish Cypriot Community, and will provide its assistance during the harmonization process, in order to coordinate the the preparation of the necessary infrastructures.

Hoping to keep in touch with you, towards working solidarily, best regards,

Arslan Bıçaklı
Türk-Sen General President