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FEDERAL UNION OF EUROPEAN NATIONALITIES
FÖDERALISTISCHE UNION EUROPÄISCHER NATIONALITÄTEN
ФЕДЕРАЛИСТСКИЙ СОЮЗ ЕВРОПЕЙСКИХ НАЦИОНАЛЬНЫХ МЕНЬШИНСТВ
UNION FÉDÉRALISTE DES COMMUNAUTÉS ETHNIQUES EUROPÉENNES

13.10.2022

STATEMENT OF THE FUEN PRESIDUM ON THE CRITISISM PUBLISHED AFTER THE FUEN CONGRESS

The Presidium of the Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN) works on the basis of the Statutes and Rules of Procedure of FUEN and is committed to freedom, democracy and the rule of law, to openness, transparency and mutual respect, as laid down in the Statutes and the FUEN Charter of 2006. This has also been the basis for holding our 2022 Assembly of Delegates. We condemn all violations of freedom, democracy, human rights and the rule of law - everywhere!

According to its statutes, FUEN is "at the service of the autochthonous minorities of Europe". The strength of FUEN lies in its more than 100 member organisations. The cause that unites all these organisations in FUEN is the protection of minorities. They are all free to express their political views. We recognise their right to express and represent them whenever they want.

The FUEN Presidium in its meeting on the 12 October taking into consideration the letter from several member organizations in Germany, examined all aspects of the Assembly of Delegates that took place in Berlin and concluded that all the decisions were taken according to the FUEN Statutes and the Rules of Procedures, the election process also respected all internal regulation, moreover all the organisations had the chance to address the Presidium after the presentation of the reports and a debate on democratic principles also took place.

It was criticised that the original resolution of the Minority Council was rejected. However, there are good reasons for this. For the FUEN Delegates Assembly, which took place in Berlin on 1 October, a total of nine resolutions were submitted on time, i.e. ten weeks in advance, and were also presented. Two resolutions were submitted as emergency resolutions after this deadline. According to the Rules of Procedure, the Presidium then decides whether these resolutions can be submitted. The resolution of the Minority Council – which is not an affiliate and could not present a draft resolution itself – was submitted on Friday, 23 September, one week before the Assembly of Delegates, and was unanimously rejected in an online meeting of the Presidium on Monday, 26 September, mainly because it was submitted too late. This is not just a formality, but has an important substantive background: our members must have the opportunity to deal with the resolutions in good time before the assembly and be able to act accordingly.

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The resolution contained several statements which the minorities in the respective country themselves and also the Presidium was very critical of. It was also clear that the proposal does not include any topics as stated in Article 3 of the FUEN Statutes. The statement aimed to "emphasise the independence of our FUEN - also from important donors". This was referring to the funding from Hungary. The Presidium was unanimous that the financial support from the Bethlen Gábor Found from Hungary is not tied to any conditions and in no way instrumentalises the minorities. On the contrary, the funds from Hungary have helped FUEN to carry out its work independently.

Democratic principles and internal rules have been fully respected by FUEN. The members of the Presidium work on a voluntary basis and their professional and political activities cannot be controlled by the organisations. Nevertheless, their actions must respect the fundamental values and democratic principles of FUEN.

The FUEN Presidium rejects all assertion regarding its funding sources being tied to any conditions, other than pursuing the goals of the organisation from its statute. The leadership of FUEN is more committed to give equal weight to the concerns of all minority groups and member organisations and to be the credible common voice of a constantly growing number of minority organisations from Europe.

Constant dialogue remains an important principle of our activities, so we call on the member organisations from Germany to an internal discussion on the issues they have raised. We would like to invite everyone to a discussion with the member organisations of the Minorities Council in a timely manner.

The Presidium stands united behind its decisions and strives to remain a strong and united voice for the autochthonous minority groups in Europe. We have achieved a lot for minority protection in Europe in the past, but there are still many challenges to overcome - we want to overcome these for and with our member organisations.