

UNITE Statement on Greece

Last Sunday 5th July 2015 the Greek people sent a clear and unequivocal message that the era of austerity must end. UNITE congratulates them for their courage in standing up to the relentless intimidation and pressure of the Troika. The referendum was not about leaving the European Union or the Euro, all indications are clear that Greece wants to remain in the European Union and in the Euro, however it was a clear message that Europe needs to change.

The policies that have been imposed on Greece over the last five years have been a disaster on every measure. Unemployment and poverty have rocketed, the economy has shrunk by 26% and the debt has continued to soar. The crisis facing Greece was not caused by the Greek people – yet they have been made to pay the price time after time. A new approach is needed that starts by putting the interests and needs of the people of Greece ahead of those of the international bankers that caused the crisis in the first place.

UNITE will continue to stand in solidarity with the Greek people and ahead of the coming summit on Sunday 12th July 2015 and urges the European Commission and European Governments to engage honestly with the new proposal of the Greek government to find a long term sustainable solution.

UNITE strongly condemns the comments made in the lead up to the referendum by many senior European and international figures. The language that has been adopted towards Greece displays an unacceptable arrogance and it is this attitude that has played a key role in the failure to find acceptable solutions. The call of the President of the European Parliament, Martin Schulz, to replace the democratically elected government with a government of technocrats is a disgrace and epitomises everything that is wrong. It is not Greece that needs the imposition of a technocratic government it is Europe that must listen to the democratic will of the people of Greece.

Greece has been used as a laboratory for the policies of austerity. That experiment has now failed, as it is failing in the UK and elsewhere across Europe. It is up to the political leaders of Europe to now sit down with the Government of Alexis Tsipras and reach a deal that is sustainable and ensures a future for Greece based on solidarity, the future of Europe depends upon getting it right.