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ETUCE – European Trade Union Committee for Education
Education International - European Region

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To: Mr Nicolae Ciuca, Prime Minister of Romania (pm@gov.ro)
Ms Ligia Deca, Minister of Education (cabinet@edu.gov.ro)

Cc: Mr Simion Hăncescu, President of Federatia Sindicatelor Libere din Invatamant
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Mr Marius Nistor, President of Federația Sindicatelor din Educație “Spiru Haret”
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Mr Anton Hadăr, President of Federația Națională Sindicală Alma Mater
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Solidarity with the ETUCE member organisation FSLE, ALMA MATER, and SPIRU HARET in Romania

Dear Prime Minister,

Dear Minister,

The European Trade Union Committee for Education (ETUCE) represents 127 education trade unions, i.e. more than 11 million teachers and other education personnel at all levels of education across Europe. ETUCE is recognised as a European Social Partner for education at EU level and a European Trade Union Federation within ETUC, the European Trade Union Confederation. ETUCE is also the European Region of Education International (EI), the global federation of education trade unions.

With this letter, ETUCE reaffirms its strong solidarity with its member organisations in Romania, the Federatia Sindicatelor Libere din Invatamant (FSLI), Federația Națională Sindicală Alma Mater (Alma Mater), Federația Sindicatelor din Educație “Spiru Haret” (“Spiru Haret”) for the general strike starting on Monday, 22 May 2023. According to

FSLI, Alma Mater, and “Spiru Haret” the disastrous education policies of the Government are making this protest action unavoidable: the discussions initiated by the trade unions with the Ministry of Education for pay rise and enhanced working conditions have not been completed and the social partner consultations planned for May have not taken place. As a result, the government has allowed for the collective agreement for the education sector to expire.

ETUCE supports FSLI, Alma Mater, and “Spiru Haret” and insist on the correct implementation of principle 8 on social dialogue and involvement of workers of the European Pillar of Social Rights: “The social partners shall be consulted on the design and implementation of economic, employment and social policies according to national practices”, in line with ILO Convention No. 144 and Recommendation No. 152 on Tripartite Consultation. Such principle has also been recognised in the recent European Commission Communication “Strengthening social dialogue in the European Union” [COM(2023) 40 final] and in the proposal for Council Recommendation on the same matter [COM(2023) 38 final].

FSLI, Alma Mater, and “Spiru Haret” call for higher public investment in education in Romania. According to Eurostat data, the insufficient total budget of only 3.2% GDP remains below the EU average of 4.8% GDP and is the second lowest in Europe, showing a worrying downwards trend over the period 2019-2021. ETUCE reminds that financial resources are essential for education and training systems to perform and provide quality education to the future generation. Together with its member organisations in Romania, ETUCE calls on the Romanian government to apply the existing legislation and increase the salaries of all categories of employees in education, of teachers and academics, especially new entrants to the profession, as well as of auxiliary, administration and non-teaching staff. For the teaching profession to become an attractive profession for highly qualified teaching professionals, decent salaries need to be ensured for all teachers and researchers according to the principle of equal pay for equal work and work of equal value. All teachers should have the highest level of qualifications and be paid appropriately, i.e. no less than the equivalent salary level of other professionals who have tertiary level qualifications.

Teachers, academics and other education personnel deserve and rightly demand decent teaching and learning conditions for teachers and students, including among other issues central heating and sanitary facilities in all education institutions in cities and rural areas; modern physics, chemistry and biology laboratories; the provision of sports fields and facilities as well as equipping education institutions with the necessary digital infrastructure and security systems to ensure the safety of students and education staff; as well as making more physical teaching material available.

ETUCE, representing 127 education trade unions in Europe, stands in solidarity with FSLI, Alma Mater, “Spiru Haret”, and their affiliates in Romania. We reiterate the importance of fully implementing the extensive reform programme “Romania Educata” (Educated Romania), announced seven years ago and calls on the government to come to the table to negotiate better working conditions and decent pay. ETUCE fully supports the effort of its members organisations FSLI, Alma Mater and “Spiru Haret” to make the teaching profession more attractive, in particular, to stop the brain drain among young people. The education system in Romania cannot rely anymore on unqualified and unexperienced professionals replacing those retiring, it rather needs to ensure higher salaries and better and more

inclusive working conditions to attract and retain skilled and passionate teachers, academics, and education personnel.

ETUCE believes in the respect of democratic values and principles of social partners. Ensuring a high-quality educational process requires energetic, creative and motivated teachers with employment stability, decent and competitive salary, and balanced workload. To achieve this, the government of Romania must engage in a meaningful and positive social dialogue with trade unions. We continue closely monitoring the situation and support FSLI, Alma Mater, "Spiru Haret", and their members in this fight for higher public investment in education to ensure decent working conditions and salaries for education staff in Romania.

Yours sincerely,



Susan Flocken
ETUCE European Director