



Join the “NO NAZIS ON OUR STREETS!” demonstration



For the 17th year in a row, in February, Sofia will turn into one of the most embarrassing and repulsive places on the Balkans. Nazis and fascists from all over Europe come to the capital of Bulgaria so they can march undisturbed on “Lukovmarsh” and demonstrate their inhumane ideology along with their Bulgarian counterparts on the streets of Sofia. The happening of “Lukovmarsh” requires our mobilization and definite rejection. Tolerating neo-nazi marches is a shame for our society. It is important that every one of us takes a stand against such events!

Who is Hristo Lukov and what is “Lukovmarsh”?

Hristo Lukov (1887 – 1943) is a Bulgarian lieutenant-general and politician, minister of war between 1925 and 1938. Between 1942 and 1943 he is the leader of the ultra-nationalistic organization “Union of the Bulgarian National Legions” (UBNL). The messages of the UBNL clearly proclaim anti-semitism xenophobia, totalitarianism and fascism. UBNL tried to force the government into sending the Bulgarian Jewish population to Germany during WW2, where concentration camps await them. Hristo Lukov is known to be close to the Third Reich and an advocate of national socialism and fascism.

“Lukovmarsh” is conducted as a torch-lit march that strongly recalls the dark years of war, repression and a cult towards the totalitarian state. The formal and informal organizations behind the march are a huge part of the Bulgarian far-right movement (most claiming to be simply nationalistic and patriotic, but also openly fascist groups).

The main organizer is the Bulgarian National Union (BNU) with the help of VMRO (officially part of the parliamentary group United Patriots), the Bulgarian National Radical Party, the Academy for Reserve Officers and Patriotic Troops and Citizens, the Association of Bulgarian Football Fans, the non-profit organization “Vyarnost”, the restored UBNL, as well as the self-defining as nazi organizations “Blood and Honor”, National Resistance and the recent addition, “White Front”.

Traditionally, members of foreign ultra-national and neo-nazi organizations take part in “Lukovmarsh” - Spain (La Falange), Germany (NPD, Die Rechte, Der III Weg), France (Terre et peuple), Italy (CasaPound), Austria, Croatia, Poland (Narodowe Odrodzenie Polski), Romania (Nova Dreapta), Hungary, Sweden (The Nordic Front), Russia (Russian imperial movement), etc. A large part of these organizations is banned in their home countries and use the opportunity to run their international meetings in Bulgaria, where deliberately or not, the presence of neonazism and neofascism is belittled and ignored at the institutional level.



In 2019 Bulgaria was dominated by neo-nazism, racism, social tension and violence.

In January 2019 a video appeared a video in YouTube, showing two white men (“proud Bulgarians”) beating up and humiliating a Roma person. There is no official investigation of the case, which is one of many. Except a degrading act, it was an attempt at re-kindling ethnic hatred and division.

This division was reinforced by the ruling elite from the clique of the “United Patriots” and the vice-prime minister Krassimir Karakachanov who provoked a protest with a request for his designation because of his racist remarks - “gypsies in Bulgaria have become insolent” and “the tolerance of the Bulgarian society is over”. This was Karakachanov’s comment to a fight between a couple of Roma people and a military in the village of Voyvodinovo, which resulted in beating of the military. What followed these events was even more brutal - there was a collective punishment for all the Roma in the village, who had nothing to do with this incident. They were evicted and their houses were destroyed.

In February, a few days before the neo-nazi “Lukovmarsh”, a woman is attacked in the center of Sofia because of her sexual identity. The perpetrator is a white man, who was swearing at her and broke two of her teeth in broad daylight. The perpetrator was not found.

Again in February, Krassimir Karakachanov sets an example for institutional racism by introducing measures for the “final solution of the gypsy question”, which in the way it is formulated evokes associations with the “Final Solution of the Jewish question” which resulted in the Holocaust. A part of the “solution” were measures such as the annulment of the status of single Roma mothers, labor duty, restriction of the birth rate of the Roma people, introduction of payment for emergency medical help and “the gypsies without an address” not to be allowed to inhabit their houses. His argument for this “solution” was that there was no transparency in spending money for integration, which only confirms the facts that state politics don’t work, that is a whole lot of corruption taking place and there is a total lack of transparency on the funds spent.

On the 20th of April in Sofia a meeting of neo-nazi organizations from Germany, France, Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic took place. The date for this Pan-European fascist event was not chosen by chance - 20th of April is Hitler's birthday. The Bulgarian right wing extremists often organize events on this date with the pretext that they are "celebrating the April uprising" (an important event for Bulgaria's national liberation struggle in the 19th century). The hosts of the meeting were The Bulgarian National Union, main organizers of Lukovmarsh.

In October we showed the world the face of Bulgarian football ultras groups. During the qualifications for Euro 2020 between the national teams of Bulgaria and England, the game was interrupted twice because of racist chants in the Bulgarian audience which was full of obvious fascists. The president of the Bulgarian Football Union, Borisslav Mihaylov, and the coach of the Bulgarian team, Krassimir Balukov, failed to point out racist problems in Bulgarian football and shifted the focus of the debate.

The newly chosen persecutor of the country (after mass protests against his candidature because of accusations in corruption), Ivan Geshev, also demonstrated his racist beliefs. In an interview for the national television, he declared that "it is what gypsies do", using the word as an insult against an opponent.

In November neo-nazis organized a torch procession in the center of the city of Plovdiv. The event was organized by "Blood and Honour" Bulgaria, Bulgarian National Union (BNS), White Front and Branitel from Stara Zagora. The authorities were not preoccupied at all by the gathering of so many fascist organizations in one place - witnesses of the events share with the media that "the youths were acting friendly with the police who were escorting them." The lack of reaction to such an event is a frightening sign of legitimization of neo-nazism and the ideologies of hatred in Bulgaria.

Except on the street, neo-nazism is rooting in the state apparatus. Representatives of one of the ruling parties, the United Patriots, made a suggestion that the law enforcement should be joined by volunteer authorized to "fight against Roma crime". In the vision of the patriots, these units should be entitled to make civil arrests. We would like to remind that in 2007, The Bulgarian National Union (BNS) with chairman Boyan Rassate, now replaced by Plamen Dimitrov, declared the establishment of a national guard against "gypsy terror". The guard even had uniforms that were almost identical to the uniforms of the Hitler's stormtroopers.

One of the most notorious racists in Bulgaria continues to be a member of the European Parliament - Angel Dzhambazki. He has made racist comments from the tribune of the European Parliament, including towards his MP colleagues. He was known of speaking against drunk drivers and in December he was caught driving under the influence of alcohol. He did not hide the fact that he sat in his car with the clear conscience of being drunk. In 2018, he was caught with his personal weapon (a pistol) in his hand luggage at Sofia airport.

The social climate in 2019 was dominated by patriarchal violence. At least 25 girls and women lost their lives in Bulgaria, among whom a 7 year-old who was brutally raped, beaten and murdered. Among the women who survived was a young woman stabbed in a train and saved by a Roma man and a woman that was brutally beaten and threatened with a gun by her partner – a policeman. In Bulgaria the violence against women is huge and ignored as a problem and the group of the United Patriots are directly responsible for every murdered, raped and beaten woman in Bulgaria, since they were the biggest opponents of the The Council of Europe's Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention).

All these events represent a very well orchestrated process of confusion, division and polarization of society, as well as absolute fascisization of the minds of Bulgarians, who are constantly directed at looking for an enemy outside of the elites and the political class. The need for strongly opposing such tendencies is bigger than ever.



Why should we oppose neo-nazi marches?

“Lukovmarsh” is a manifesto of all the inhumane perceptions and an example of how the system “works”. Despite the multiple protests against the march, the countless evidence pointing out the association of the major part of the participants in the march with suspicious, criminal or indeed terrorist groups and ideologies (according to information provided by the Department of Interior Affairs in Sofia), “Lukovmarsh” is held every year. The lifeless efforts of the Municipality to “forbid” the march look like a bad attempt to deflect the problem, which has consequences however - hate speech, the grouping and regrouping of far-right organizations, the presence of dangerous and criminal individuals on the streets of Sofia is a fact.

The aim of the counter-demonstration “No Nazis On Our Streets!” is to unite everyone who opposes hate, exploitation and dividing in our society, to unite all people that want to live in understanding with each other, that support solidarity and humanity.

Let's show neo-nazis that they don't represent the voice of our society!



The “No Nazis On Our Streets!” demonstration will take place on the 22nd of February (Saturday) at 13:00 h, starting point - the park next to Central mineral baths, Sofia.



antifa-bulgaria.org



Antifa Bulgaria/ Антифа България