

a call out for anti repression workshops at the PGA conference in Greece 18th/25th of August

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A call-out for anti-repression workshops at the PGA and international reports of attacks to political spaces, erosion of political freedoms, and repression over the past decades

We suppose there is no need to explain why and how important anti-repression activities and mutual support are, especially now. In the last two decades the situation in the world has changed drastically. Neoliberal reforms, privatization, precarisation, gentrification. New labour, housing and other codes. To shut up the discontents and dissidents new anti-terrorist and anti-extremist laws were enacted. At the same time systems of control and surveillance were developed.

For the 5th European PGA conference, we propose a series of workshops on anti-repression to elaborate strategies to fight mounting state terror and to strengthen our solidarity. To gain practical benefits from these workshops we would like to prepare a good basis, then we can concentrate directly on more practical issues. We ask people to write an overview of the attacks to political spaces, erosion of political freedoms, and repression, that have happened in their countries over the past decades and send them in before the PGA conference or to bring them with you. Please, send your overviews, ideas, analyses to antirep@riseup.net. To give you a starting point we prepared a list of questions. You can base your overview on this list, you can give answers to the questions, or you can just ignore it :) Whichever you prefer.

Even if you do not plan to go to the 5th European PGA conference and you have something to say, please feel free to contribute to the project. It might also be a good idea to inform us that you are going to write something on your country since there might be other people writing something as well, with whom you can coordinate and cooperate. For coordination and preparation of the workshops you can also subscribe to the mailing list legalguides@squat.net. We also have an idea of publishing the collected information (maybe as wiki-page, maybe somehow else).

Some of us have experience from anti-repression workshops at the Leiden PGA conference 2002 and the Belgrade PGA conference 2004, some from the Dijon PGA conference 2006, where the International Legal Guide project <http://legal.squat.net/> was started, where we made the first attempt to develop some kind of international overview of the attacks and erosion of our political space over the past decade.

We would like to make such workshops more effective. Thus, we would like to avoid repeatable and endless presentations from different countries and cities, instead we would like to print such presentations as a readout so that people could familiarize themselves with the information prior to the workshop. We would also try to summarize different experiences and make a short overall presentation in the beginning "however the main focus would be in evaluation of the already existing projects and discussion about new ones. This does not mean that people not involved in such a work are not welcome" quite the contrary, however we do not have the luxury of spending a rare occasion of international workshops for talking about issues which everyone may read about from internet anytime.

We are therefore looking for analyses of legal changes and strategies of repression of grassroots activism in your city or country over the past five or ten years. Generally speaking, we would like to know how has repression and social control increased in your country over the past five to ten years? In which ways does your government try to suppress the discontents (e.g. harsher accusations, easier convictions, higher sentences, more state violence at demonstrations and public spaces to intimidate, high claims for damage, use of surveillance)?

List of questions:

What new laws have been introduced? e.g. Anti-terrorist legislation, Civil Laws (housing, labour etc.), Public Order legislation/freedom of assembly (such as the Criminal Justice Act in the UK, or the Codigo Penal in Spain, Identification Duty in the Netherlands), etc.

How could these laws be passed and accepted? How has society reacted?

How have those laws been applied? Has the boundaries of these laws been extended or functions changed (â€˜function creepâ€™)? Differences between theory and practice (legislation and repression practices)

Changes in the judicial system (e.g. Precedent Law in France, restrictions for appealing in the Netherlands).

Suppression of different political rights and freedoms (in legislation and in practice): restrictions of freedom of speech and assembly, to express your opinion and demonstrate (easier to be arrested and convicted nowadays; denormalization of government critics).

How has the practice of social control changed?

Use of preventive measures ~ â€˜possibility of offence is punishableâ€™ (e.g. preventive arrests, ASBO in the UK, etc.)

How are they using surveillance? (e.g. Patriot Act in US, CCTV, Phone tapping, ID cards and controls, travel cards, etc.)

Who are the main targets of this repression? (e.g. migrants, activists, minors, subcultures participants)

Use of anti-terrorist / anti-extremist legislation to repress protest (e.g. 129a in Germany), and other legislations (e.g. lock up anonymous activists in deportation prisons in the Netherlands)

Changes in jail/prison/detention centres system (privatization processes, etc.)

What impact has this had on grassroots political activity and on society in general?

Descriptions (links at internet and other publications) of the most outrageous cases of repressions

Strategies of counteracting repressions

Groups, collectives, and so on dealing with repressions in your country/city Is there anything else you think is important to know about the situation in your city/country?

<http://balkans.puscii.nl/?q=content/a-call-out-anti-repression-workshops-pga-conference-greece>