URGENT RESOLUTION
proposed by CANAE

OBESSU rejects the closure of the Spanish Youth Council

The Spanish Government announced its plan to reform the public administration in Spain as part of its cost-saving policy. Among the proposed measures, the currently independent, youth-led entity 'Consejo de la Juventud de España (CJE) – Spanish National Youth Council', will be integrated into a consultative body under the auspices of the Spanish government agency for youth (INJUVE) with limited budget and little influence.

The CJE is a diverse and democratic platform, the only state body for coordination, dialogue, training and cooperation for more than 80 organisations and associations of which it is composed, which are very different in character and ideology.

A youth council is a form of representation of young people through which youth express their voice and engage in community decision-making. Given that a precondition of a healthy democracy is the active participation of citizens, especially young people, and a vibrant civil society sector, including youth organisations, having youth structures representing and empowering young people to have a say and be heard is crucial. In fact, there are similar structures in all European countries, the National Youth Councils.

The importance of these structures has been consistently reasserted in resolutions from various international institutions. For example, the Youth White Paper from the European Union calls for member states to promote participation among young people in public life through general introduction of youth councils that are independent of political authorities, at a regional and national level. It also calls on authorities to consult them before any decision that could have significant consequences for young people.

If the Spanish government closes the National Youth Council, it will be impossible for young people to organise themselves in a platform that is independent of the political forces of government. This would severely impair youth protection, as young people would lose a legitimate spokesman to defend their interests.

Taking into account the current difficult situation for young Spanish people in social, economic and labour terms, with some of the highest youth unemployment figures in Europe, it is now more necessary than ever to promote all possible channels of dialogue with civil society. To deprive Spanish young people of the legitimate role played by the CJE would mean a big step backwards for Spain in terms of youth rights at a European level.

Therefore, the Organising Bureau of European School Student Unions (OBESSU):

- **Stands for independent, representative, non-partisan and youth-led national youth councils as tools for active participation of young people.**
- **Urges the Spanish government to back down on its proposal to abolish the Spanish Youth Council (CJE).**
- **Demands the European institutions and national governments to get involved in defending independent National Youth Councils and implementing policies for real youth participation.**

The Organising Bureau of European School Student Unions (OBESSU) is the platform for cooperation among school student unions active in secondary general and vocational education in Europe. We unite and represent the voice of European school students and aim at improving the quality of our education systems, school democracy and the life of school students.