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Comrade Enver Hoxha's message of greetings addressed to the participants in the celebration of the 40th Anniversary of the 2nd Meeting of the Anti-fascist National Liberation Council

Dear comrades, sisters and brothers,

All our people together with you, ex-members of the Anti-fascist National Liberation Council, and the patriotic, courageous and generous inhabitants of the district of Berat, today celebrate the 40th anniversary of the 2nd Meeting of the Anti-fascist National Liberation Council which gave Albania its first Democratic Government. On the occasion of this anniversary, one of the most brilliant in the history of the great National Liberation War of our country, I congratulate you and wish you from my heart: a happy day.

Four decades have gone by from that unforgettable historic event, but in my mind I retain the indelible memory of our arrival at Berat late one night after two days of travelling through the mountains of heroic Skrapar, the hospitality and indescribable enthusiasm of the people of your city and the surrounding villages who learned about the arrival of the Antifascist Committee and the General Staff, their boundless enthusiasm and fiery cheers for the Party, for the Democratic Government, for free Albania and for our glorious National Liberation Army, with which they accompanied us in every step. The rejoicing of the people, their songs, the ardent words and greetings which were addressed to us, their sons, in those days of great joy, expressed their unshakeable faith in the leadership of the Party and in the new Albanian State which had laid its foundations in the Congress of Përmet a few months ago. This faith was born and cemented in the great National Liberation War, in the gigantic efforts of the people led with wisdom and revolutionary courage by the Party for the liberation of the country and the establishment of the new people's state power.

The festive atmosphere of those fiery days in Berat was reflected more than in anything else in the simple hall decorated with flags, with fresh flowers and laurel branches, in which the historical meeting carried out its proceedings. The enthusiasm and continuing applause which accompanied the discussions of the comrades are beyond description. They reached their highest when the members of the Anti-fascist Council, democratically elected in Përmet, voted unanimously together with the people, who filled half of the hall, boxes and gallery, with their raised fists, for the transformation of the Anti-fascist National Liberation Committee into the Democratic Government. This was the expression of the approval which our whole people gave the immortal work of the Party, the fulfilment of the wishes and aspirations which were becoming a reality before their eyes on the eve of the complete liberation of the Homeland. This unprecedented and very touching manifestation of the unity of the people around the Party showed the Yugoslavs, the British and the Americans, too, who at that time passed as friends, comrades and allies, how closely linked with one another were the people with the Party, and how difficult, indeed, impossible, it was to sabotage the victories of the people's revolution in Albania with intrigues, behind-the-scenes deals, threats, flattery and empty promises.

The historic decisions of the 2nd Meeting of the Anti-fascist National Liberation Council constituted a great political victory for our people, who under the leadership of the Party, at the cost of blood and sacrifices, had liberated until that time over three fourths of the territory of Albania and had become a sound basis for the imminent final victory over the Nazi occupiers and internal reaction. The Meeting of Berat sealed the seizure of the political power by our working masses, legitimized the first Democratic Government of the new Albania. The coming generations will never forget its historic decisions, which further strengthened the new power born in the fire of the heroic war which our people waged against the savage Nazi-fascist enemies and their tools, the

bourgeoisie, beys, bayraktars and landowners, who had betrayed the supreme interests of the people and the Homeland.

The program of the Government was charged with onerous tasks for the difficult conditions of that time, therefore, all of us went down to work immediately for their implementation in practice. How remote seems the time when each state department occupied only one room in the house at the end of the Mangalem precinct, but how close and fresh in memory are for us those sleepless nights full of worries and efforts to carry the war for the liberation of the Homeland through to the end, to rebuild the burned-out towns and villages, to reconstruct the economy which the enemies had ravaged. We lacked cadres and specialists, funds and means, but the all-round support of the people and the correct line of the Party gave us confidence and strength to overcome any difficulty, to carry out the program of the Government with success and within a short time and to turn the promises made into a reality, as has always happened in socialist Albania.

The people won, defended and have continuously perfected their state through struggle. Many an attempt has been made by the imperialist and revisionist foreign enemies to overthrow or degenerate our power, but their smiles and threats, the terrorist bands sent from abroad and the agents who had wormed their way into our ranks, all the enemies, have seen their efforts and aims defeated. Our state power is invincible, because the Party and the people watch it vigilantly and in steel unity. Under the solicitude and correct leadership of the Party it has been democratized in ceaseless struggle against any manifestation of bureaucracy, liberalism and concessions to class enemies.

With a strong state, with the Party in the forefront, always loyally implementing the teachings of Marxism-Leninism, our people have made the best of the fallen a reality. With our victories in all fields of life, in the economy, education, culture, science, health services and defence, and above all, in the formation of the new man, we go proudly and with many gains to the 40th anniversary of the liberation of the Homeland which we will celebrate with magnificence next month. The achievements of 40-year-old socialist Albania in the strengthening and revolutionization of the Party and the state are the powerful base and sure guarantee of new still greater successes in the complete construction of socialist society.

Long live our heroic people!

Long live the people's state power and our glorious Party which leads us from victory to victory!

Yours

ENVER HOXHA

Tirana, October 21, 1984