

Meeting of the Council of the Socialist International
Santo Domingo, 28-29 January 2019

**DECLARATION ON DEFENDING RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS AGAINST INTOLERANCE, DISCRIMINATION,
XENOPHOBIA AND POPULISM**

The Socialist International has always advocated for a tolerant society free from all forms of discrimination, with true equality of rights and opportunities, as outlined in its Declaration of Principles. Consequently, the rise of populism and populist movements that seek to create and exploit differences between different social, ethnic, religious and socioeconomic groups in society is a grave concern for the global social democratic movement.

The Council is deeply concerned by rising xenophobia, anti-Semitism, Islamophobia and other forms of discrimination based on ethnic origin or religious beliefs, which can never be tolerated or accepted in any of our societies. It is the fundamental right of every human on the planet to develop their full personal potential and live their life free from intolerance and discrimination.

As a global organisation within which member parties from different continents, ethnicities, cultures and religions work together to advance their common cause, the Socialist International is a prime example of the value of cooperation and shows how cultural diversity can enrich our societies. Each and every one of its member parties must continue to embody these values and to oppose the simplistic and divisive rhetoric of populism, which offers no solutions to the complex and multi-faceted challenges facing our societies.

Populism has been able to gain in strength due to disillusionment as a consequence of an ineffective and unjust response to the most recent global financial crisis, which has resulted in greater inequalities and austerity policies that unjustly impact on the middle and working classes. The response to this populism, which threatens hard-won freedoms, must be for socialist and social democrats to intensify their struggle to reduce inequalities, increase opportunities and achieve sustainable growth to the benefit of all citizens.
