

The Socialist International Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean convened in La Romana, Dominican Republic, on 3-4 June, 2022.

At the opening of the meeting, the leader of the host party (PRD), Chair of the Committee and a Vice-President of the SI, Miguel Vargas, addressed delegates and thanked them for their presence at the meeting. He emphasised his satisfaction at resuming the face-to-face activities of the organisation after more than two years marked by the restrictions imposed by the pandemic, and highlighted the constant effort of the SI Secretariat during this time allowing us to continue meeting regularly by electronic means to give a timely response to the challenges that have marked this period. The social democratic family, he pointed out, must now think about its priorities for the agenda that will characterise the post-pandemic stage.

The topics proposed for this meeting – the economy, migration and citizen security – are undoubtedly the most significant challenges facing the region today. Covid19 brought to light the fragility of many of the advances that had been made in recent years in our countries, which today face scenarios marked by social and economic setbacks, increased poverty and inequalities. These realities constitute threats to our democracies, many of which are experiencing social unrest and advances in populist and authoritarian trends. Vargas reiterated that the commitment of our political family must always be to democracy and the fight against the lack of opportunities and the exclusion of important sectors of our peoples. Promoting recovery processes in employment and the economy that coordinate public and private initiatives and emphasise social justice continues to be an imperative of our movement today, he stressed. He concluded his words of welcome by calling for unity and solidarity between the different social democratic forces in the region.



Luis Ayala, SI Secretary General, thanked the PRD for its hospitality and constant support for the organisation. He recalled that it was in the Dominican Republic more than three decades ago, where this Committee was formed under the influence and determined will of its leader at the time, José Francisco Peña Gómez, with his commitment to democracy, freedom and the solidarity of the progressive political forces of the region. Today, Ayala emphasised that Peña's legacy continues with strength in the figure of Miguel Vargas, highlighting his commitment to the SI and his valuable contribution to Dominican politics.

After the inaugural speeches and a press conference in which the Secretary General and the Vice-Presidents of the SI present at the meeting participated -Miguel Vargas (PRD,

SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN MEETS



Dominican Republic), Kattia Rivera (PLN, Costa Rica), Victor Benoit (RSD, Haiti) and Rafael Michelini (NE, Uruguay) – the delegates began their review of the proposed agenda: Priorities in the new post-pandemic scenario: Challenges and proposals for the region; working to strengthen democracy and end populism and authoritarianism in Latin America and the Caribbean; for a fair, regulated and humane migration policy on the continent; and towards the construction of a citizen security model based on our social democratic vision to confront the growing crime in Latin America.

In their speeches, the delegates addressed the different topics on the agenda with a regional perspective, as well as reconciling it with recent political developments in their nations.

Horace Dalley, Jamaica

The delegates of the PNP of Jamaica, Horace Dalley and Janice Allen, expressed their joy at reuniting with the region's members of this political family, whom they had not seen since the Montego Bay Committee meeting at the end of 2019, and said that their party seeks to respond to the economic and social crises provoked by the pandemic with progressive formulas. Dalley commented that democracy in the '70s had come up against aggression and ignorance in practically the entire continent but flourished again, and they were confident that in the face of the new onslaughts of populism and authoritarianism, social democracy will once again react energetically and be strengthened. Dalley also pointed to insecurity as a very central challenge for the entire region. José Inés Castillo (UNE, Guatemala), intervened in the same sense: to work tirelessly for the most dispossessed in our countries. He also informed the members of the Committee that the leader of his party and Vice-President of the SI, Sandra Torres, is in a good position in the Guatemalan polls for the 2023 elections and expressed his hope that this time her candidacy will not be hit by illegitimate judicial or administrative constraints.

José Murat (PRI, Mexico) brought greetings from the leader of his party and Vice-President of the SI, Alejandro Moreno, and contributed to the debate by emphasising that the economic deterioration and the living conditions of our peoples explain to a great extent the populist and authoritarian trends, migration and insecurity. Delegates Sandra Noriega and José Castillo (PRD, Panama) recalled that in the face of conflicts such as the one Ukraine

is experiencing today, it is appropriate to once again highlight the commitment of the social democratic forces to peace, multilateralism and the peaceful settlement of disputes.



Working Sessions

The first day of work concluded with the interventions of Luis Ernesto Camilo and Janet Camilo (PRD, Dominican Republic): the first made a call to strengthen the institutional framework in the face of the proliferation in our countries of symptoms of what he called inorganic democracies, such as constitutional amendments to the charter, increase in public debt, use of the judiciary, constitutional judges and control bodies by the authority, management of the media, among others. For her part, Janet Camilo urged us to strengthen our political parties and actively work to regain the trust of the electorate to allow the social democratic forces to be in the governments of the nations of the region.

During its second day of work, the Committee listened to Fernando Martín (PIP, Puerto Rico), who urged delegates to support a declaration for the self-determination and independence of his country; and the president of the Bolivian UN party, Rita Elizabeth Reyes, who asked the delegates to adopt a decision in favour of judicial independence and the legitimate protection of freedom in political action without threats or judicial or administrative sanctions motivated by political persecution, as in the case of her country or Guatemala, among other nations in the region.

Resolutions

Having reviewed its agenda and discussed the political situations in the different countries of the region in light of its main themes, the Committee concluded its meeting with the adoption of six resolutions: Declaration of La Romana, Declaration on Judicial Independence, Declaration on Venezuela, Declaration on Haiti, Declaration on Uruguay and Declaration on Puerto Rico.