

SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL



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Report of the Secretary General

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PO Box 67973
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XXV Congress of the Socialist International, Cartagena, Colombia For a world in peace, with equality and solidarity

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Under the heading *“For a world in peace, with equality and solidarity”*, the Socialist International held its XXV Congress in Colombia, lending its global voice in support of the momentous peace process underway in that country following the recent peace accord reached between the government and the rebel group FARC.

The Congress took place in the historic city of Cartagena from 2 to 4 March 2017, hosted by the SI member party, the Colombian Liberal Party (PLC), and was inaugurated with the participation of His Excellency Juan Manuel Santos, President of the Republic of Colombia and 2016 Nobel Peace Prize laureate, who delivered a special address to the gathering.

The opening session of the Congress included four speakers, the secretary general of the Socialist International, the co-leader of the host party, the president of the International, and the president of the Republic of Colombia.

The SI Secretary General Luis Ayala welcomed participants and expressed the SI’s pride to be in Cartagena where the global social democratic movement had convened to demonstrate its support for the process for peace and reconciliation in Colombia, and solidarity with its people. SI parties from other regions represented at the Congress were also trying to achieve peace and bring an end to conflicts in other parts of the world, and the Peace Agreement signed in Colombia and now being implemented, was a source of inspiration for our global family. Our agenda would also address other crucial issues of concern, that of inequality in the world economy, the need for greater solidarity within and between nations, and our collective

response to those promoting agendas centered on self-interest, populism and nationalism, against multilateralism and international cooperation..

Horacio Serpa, co-leader of the host party PLC, extended to all a warm welcome to Colombia, a country of 1,140,000 square kilometres, with 49,000,000 inhabitants who were a combination of indigenous people, mestizo, black, white, mixed race, multi-ethnic, multi-cultural, Catholics, Anglicans, Evangelicals, Muslims, Jews, all coexisting under a constitution that respects gender equality, religious freedom and sexual diversity. He spoke of the advances they had made towards overcoming poverty and inequality, the achievement of the long-awaited peace agreement, and how Colombia should keep its doors open to migrants who are subject to persecution in their country of origin. As members of the Socialist International, he said, we believed that a world in peace was possible with the right to freedom, social security, employment and bread.

SI President George Papandreou, addressing the Congress, emphasised the solidarity felt with Colombia and with the efforts, courage and determination of President Santos and his government to bring peace. National reconciliation is a fragile and difficult process, he said, but was the way to a lasting and just peace. At a time when many leaders are choosing politics of polarization and fear, here was an example of leadership bringing peace and reconciliation. In outlining basic challenges in the world today, he underscored our capacity to overcome these with a response that was not based on isolationism, hatred, nationalism, walls, authoritarianism or dogmatism. Though diverse, our global family was united by its common values and beliefs in peace, cooperation, respect, dignity, tolerance, sustainability, democracy and equality.

The XXV SI Congress listened to His Excellency Juan Manuel Santos, President of the Republic of Colombia. Welcoming delegates, friends and guests, he underlined the importance of rights, freedoms and democracy to the people of Colombia. Peace, he stressed, was more than the silence of weapons, but needed consolidation through equality, and this he hoped could be a model for others in a world that was sadly polarising. He spoke of the struggle between love and fear in today's world. The human race was a single unity of all races, and it was love that helped us to understand suffering, tolerance, respect and the value of diversity as a treasure of humankind. Fear on the contrary, he said, generated threats from a lack of knowledge, which in turn became a reason for violence. The challenge was to recover unity, tolerance and love, which have been driven away by fear, and the inspiration for this could be found through the ideas, values and principles that characterize organizations such as the Socialist International.

The agenda of the Congress covered three main themes, reflecting the priorities of the movement: *“Building a more peaceful world: resolving conflicts and preventing new ones”*; *“Achieving greater equality in both the national and the global economy”*; and *“Solidarity within and between nations: a fundamental pillar of our International”*.

Building a more peaceful world: resolving conflicts and preventing new ones

Juan Fernando Cristo, Minister of the Interior of Colombia, who currently plays a key role in the implementation of the peace agreement reached with the FARC, delivered the first key-note speech on this theme, focusing on the experience of his country in bringing to a close a more than 50 year old armed conflict with rebel groups. It had been a difficult and protracted process, and continued support and encouragement was needed to see through the implementation of the agreement, a crucial part of which had commenced while the delegates to this Congress had been in Cartagena, with the demobilisation and the initiation of the hand-over of arms by the FARC to the United Nations.

Many participants at the congress took part in the discussions under this theme, with contributions illustrating their experiences in widely varying contexts. These included Julião Mateus Paulo, (MPLA, Angola); Carlos Eduardo Vieira da Cunha and Carlos Lupi (PDT, Brazil); on the search for peace in the Middle East the Congress heard from Colette Avital (Meretz, Israel), Nabeel Shaath (Fatah, Palestine) and Gal Raij (Israel Labour Party); Henry Ramos (AD, Venezuela); Guo Yezhou (Vice-Minister from the CCP, China), who addressed a special greeting to the Congress; Rubén Berríos (PIP, Puerto Rico); Ouesseini Hadizatou Yacouba (PNDS-TARAYYA, Niger); Miguel Vargas, (PRD, Foreign Minister of the Dominican Republic); Mario Jiménez (PSOE, Spain); Mikalai Statkevich (BSDP-NH, Belarus); Mustapha Ben Jaafar, (Ettakatol, Tunisia); Shazia Marri (PPP, Pakistan); Mario Nalpatian (ARF-D, Armenia); Zharmakhan Tuyakbay (OSDP, Kazakhstan); Ryoichi Hattori (SDP, Japan); Araz Alizadeh (SDPA, Azerbaijan); Sadi Pire (PUK, Iraq); Khalid Azizi (KDP, Iran); Pia Locatelli (PSI, Italy); Dahan Alnajjar (Yemen, YSP); Andres Esono Ondo (Equatorial Guinea, CPDS); Saleh Mohamed Moslem (PYD, Syria); Limam Ahmed (RFD, Mauritania); Umut Oran (CHP, Turkey); and Carolina Ordoñez (PLC, Colombia).

In the discussion on this theme of the Congress, countries and regions suffering from internal and external conflicts were identified, and their situation presented with recommendations and initiatives to overcome the challenges they faced in order to make peace a less distant goal. From armed wars to nationalism, xenophobia, corruption and the displacement of people on a massive scale, it was stressed that a constructive engagement by the international community was urgently needed, and a point of convergence by the participants was a renewed commitment of the Socialist International to continue prioritising peace, the strengthening of the United Nations as a vital institution for achieving these ends, and working with our parties in the countries throughout the world that today are suffering from conflict. The discussions underlined the need to promote and consolidate democracy and the respect for rights and freedoms for all people in order to achieve and secure peace. The strength of the Socialist International was emphasised, when working in solidarity, collectively opposing right-wing populism and nationalism, defending our values and principles in advancing international cooperation, the protection of refugees and migrants, and standing firm in support of those enduring violence, terror and oppression. A general congress resolution that was subsequently adopted, reflects these conclusions.

Elections

The decision had been taken the previous day, by the Council of the Socialist International, to appoint an Electoral Commission composed of four members from different regions, two men and two women. These were Eero Heinäluoma (SDP, Finland); Chantal Kambiwa (SDF, Cameroon); Shazia Marri (PPP, Pakistan); and Rafael Michelini (NE, Uruguay). Michelini, acting as spokesperson for the Electoral Commission, proceeded with the votes to be taken for SI President, SI Secretary General, and SI Vice-Presidents.

Only one candidate stood for the post of SI President, the current president, George Papandreou (Greece). The Congress re-elected him by acclamation. He received the vote with thanks and gratitude, looking forward to continuing his work with the SI family.

There were two candidates for the post of SI Secretary General, Luis Ayala (Chile) and Welile Nhlapo (South Africa). Rafael Michelini explained that the Commission had worked to organise the election under a strict procedure. At the time of the vote, Gwede Mantashe, ANC Secretary General, announced that the South African candidate was withdrawing his candidacy due to family reasons. Luis Ayala was subsequently re-elected by acclamation to the post of SI Secretary General. He said he was honoured by the confidence placed in him and expressed his

thanks to all the many parties that had called on him to stand for election. He believed that the International would continue to be successful as long as it was democratically self-governed by its members.

Moving to the election of the Vice-Presidents, Michelini presented a list of candidates that, as agreed by the Council, also included one candidate each from Israel and Palestine. Noting that the list complied with the statutes, thirty two Vice-Presidents were duly elected by acclamation. The Congress mandated the next Council to elect the remaining four vacant posts in the Presidium, respecting the statutory requirements in regard to gender.

The Congress then approved the proposals put forward for the posts of Honorary Presidents of the SI. These were Mustapha Ben Jaafar (Tunisia); Rubén Berríos Martínez (Puerto Rico); Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas (Mexico); Tarja Halonen (Finland); Mahamadou Issoufou (Niger); Lionel Jospin (France); Horacio Serpa (Colombia); and Jalal Talabani (Iraq).

Achieving greater equality in both the national and the global economy

Elio Di Rupo, Chair of the SI Commission on Inequality (PS, Belgium), introduced the second main theme with a key-note speech, focusing on the struggle against inequality, which was on the rise everywhere. Human beings must not be slaves of the economy, he said. As socialists we believed in human equality, it was at the very core of our DNA, and we would fight together for a united world because the greatest problems we face are global.

Eero Heinaluoma, (SDP, Finland), and Ricard Parker (Democratic Party, USA, Professor at Harvard University), both members of the SI Commission on Inequality, made contributions on this theme. In his speech, Heinaluoma warned against unfettered global capital and underlined that we are facing a generational challenge to our basic values and hard won achievements. Richard Parker delivered an address on the current unequal state of the global economy. On this subject, the Congress unanimously adopted a paper which centered on the forces that have resulted in such a wide economic gap between the poor majority and the wealthy few. Economic growth was now needed that produced stable, long-term output and jobs, and where profits could provide essential fiscal flows to governments for public welfare.

Contributions on this theme were presented by Bernal Jiménez (PLN, Costa Rica), Sühkbaataryn Batbold (MPP, Mongolia); Isabel Allende (PS, Chile), Gwede Mantashe (ANC, South Africa); Mani Shankar Aiyar (INC, India); Emmanuel Golou (PSD, Benin); André Figueiredo (PDT, Brazil); Roberto Marrero (VP, Venezuela); Svetlina Yolcheva (Bulgaria, PBSB); Jesús Rodríguez (UCR, Argentina), and Ouafa Hajji, President of Socialist International Women.

In the discussions, it was recognised that the issues of poverty and inequality were complex and multi-dimensional, and that structural change to the political economy was necessary to achieve our goals. Calls were made to governments and others to end tax havens, to take other measures to end illicit capital flows from South to North, to speed up land reform where necessary, to take stronger steps against corruption in the private and the public sector, including multi-national corporations, to strengthen gender based budgeting, to raise minimum wages, and to intensify efforts to end conflicts which undermine development and poverty reduction.

Solidarity within and between nations: a fundamental pillar of our International

Under the third main theme of solidarity within and between nations, the dramatic plight of the Rohingya minority in Myanmar was highlighted. The Congress heard an address by Maung Tun Khin, representative of the Burmese Rohingya people, on the extreme conditions his people had endured, with many killed and countless displaced in the last 5 months alone. He

cited a report by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights dated February 2017 detailing gross human rights violations that the Rohingya people had been subjected to, indicating the likely occurrence of crimes against humanity. The Congress appealed to all governments, and to the international community at large, to put pressure on the Burmese authorities, and to take the necessary action to protect the Rohingya population and bring an end to their persecution.

Contributions on the theme of Solidarity were heard from Mala Bakhtiar (PUK, Iraq) addressing the situation affecting the Kurdish people, Iraq, and the region; from Pendukeni Iivula-Ithana (SWAPO, Namibia); Sandra Torres (UNE, Guatemala); Saleh Kebzabo (UNDR, Chad); Reijo Paananen (SDP, Finland); Chantal Kambiwa (SDF, Cameroon); Elyzabeth Reyes (UN, Bolivia); Victor Benoit (Fusion, Haiti); Jorge del Castillo (APRA, Peru); Francisco Rosales (FSLN, Nicaragua); Victor Pardo (PLC, Colombia); Roberto César Birri (PS, Argentina); and David Balsa (Euro-Latin American Parliamentary Forum).

The Congress expressions on this point reaffirmed that the Socialist International, which brings together in one organization, faith communities and cultures from across the globe, stood united by its core principle of solidarity, rejecting all false claims of clashes of civilizations. Solidarity, inspired by the values and principles that define our International, was emphasised in reference to all those opposing populism and extremism, or fighting for democracy, freedoms and rights, and our support for refugees and migrants who are victims of injustice and of the absence of those freedoms and rights that we defend. The Socialist International stood today with the peace process in Colombia, as it was equally committed to working for peace in areas of conflict or civil unrest in different parts of the world. The Congress also expressed its solidarity in combatting and adapting to climate change, renewing its call on all governments to enshrine their climate change obligations in national legislation.

Declarations and Statements adopted by the Congress

Responding to proposals and requests by SI member parties, the Congress discussed and adopted a number of declarations and statements. Along with a general congress resolution, these included a declaration in support of Mexico, in view of the segregationist and discriminatory policies of the Trump Administration in the United States; a declaration in support of the right to self-determination and independence of the people of Puerto Rico; an expression of deep concern at the ongoing political, economic and social crisis affecting Venezuela; a declaration on the question of Palestine introduced by Fatah, Palestine, and the Meretz party of Israel; a declaration in support of the struggle of its member party in Mauritania, the RDF, against changes to the constitution in that country; on an initiative of the Socialist International regarding the Armenian Genocide; and a declaration against the legal restrictions on Latin American political leaders, noting the increase in politically motivated court cases in the region and calling on the responsibility of the judiciary for the proper functioning of democracy.

There was a discussion by delegates on proposed amendments to the current statutes of the SI in relation to gender equality, an issue which had been discussed by the Council on the eve of the Congress. Amendments to the statutes were adopted to include the objective of an equal number of men and women at all levels of the organization, declaring that gender equality is an issue of human rights for the movement; and to ensure the representation of women in the SI Presidium as per the statutes, stating that in case of difficulties, the SIW would be consulted. The Congress also adopted a resolution empowering future Councils to make the necessary changes to the statutes to allow for the implementation of the principle of an equal number of

men and women at all levels of the organization, and to decide on the setting up and mandate of a Committee on Equality.

Decisions on membership

The Congress endorsed the decisions which had been taken by the Council prior to the Congress to admit the Frente de Unidad Nacional of Bolivia as a new full member party, to upgrade the UNDR of Chad and the TDP of Cyprus to full membership status, and to upgrade the Polisario Front of Western Sahara to consultative status. The Congress equally ratified all the previous decisions taken by the SI Council during the inter-Congress period relating to membership.

Declarations and resolutions, XXV SI Congress, Cartagena 2-4 March 2017

For a world in peace, with equality and solidarity

The Cartagena Congress of the Socialist International addresses the priorities of our movement and of people everywhere in these increasingly troubling times. Inequality within and between societies is growing. Meanwhile, the history of efforts by our parties to address inequality is under assault as never before from the economically powerful and their well-funded political allies. Peace remains a dream in many places. Though conflicts between States have greatly diminished in recent decades, millions continue to die and to suffer from civil conflict. Whole societies are being destroyed and unprecedented numbers of refugees from war and violence most often find safe haven in countries of the South, further adding to global inequalities. Migrants from failed States and from climate disasters are certain to add to these numbers on a large scale. As well, the late 20th Century hard won solidarity among peoples and States is breaking down in many parts of the world. Increasingly governments and political parties turn to nationalism, xenophobia, and isolation as simple, doomed answers to the ongoing challenges of a truly globalised world which already requires massively scaled up global cooperation and stronger multilateral organizations and practices like the United Nations and the Socialist International.

The Socialist International well recognises these challenges in the knowledge that we, the socialist, social democratic and labour parties, are the best equipped to address them.

Our confidence rests on the unshakable moral base and values of our movement: To use power with humility and for good. To build greatness by investing in human beings. To build democracy to guarantee good decisions. To recognise that capitalism and free markets do not equal freedom. To ensure growth means social growth and greater equality. To liberate, sustain and encourage the diversity and creativity of humanity. To recognise that war solves nothing, and nothing is possible without peace. To believe that love will conquer fear in a world where human beings are of one single origin linked to one single destiny.

Our confidence also rests on our record of achievement over the past seven decades, in government and in opposition, on every continent. One such achievement is here today in Colombia. We are proud and honoured to meet in Colombia with our Socialist International member party hosts the Liberal Party of Colombia. President Juan Manuel Santos, his government and his country are a beacon of hope to the world. We salute President Santos and the representatives of the Colombian Revolutionary Armed Forces, FARC, for the peace achieved last year that put an end to more than half a century of armed conflict. A road has been opened for the stable and lasting peace that Colombians deserve. The Socialist

International welcomes the commitment and will of the whole of Colombian society to overcome the conflict. We celebrate the peace agreement consideration of the victims of the conflict and we maintain an active concern that these commitments will be fulfilled. We welcome this new era of advancing and strengthening civic culture, human rights, tolerance, the peaceful resolution of conflicts and democracy. We are also proud and honoured to have with us at this Congress member parties from Israel and from Palestine. The Socialist International renews our role and recommits our efforts to help to find a lasting, just peace for Palestinians and Israelis by building on the dialogue that takes place here. We are also pleased to have member parties here from Tunisia, Pakistan, Cyprus, Mali, and other countries where dialogues here will help address local and regional peace building and conflict prevention needs.

Along with our moral base, values and accomplishments we also recognise the unique nature and value of the Socialist International as a world-wide forum of parties that can provide hope to people across the globe. We show humanity and heart in believing in a better world. We believe people have the power to change the world on a path of virtue. In these troubled times we believe in a new deal and a new social contract on a global scale. Now, more than ever, we believe in our unity, the certainty our voice will be heard and the commitment to change for the better the lives of our common humanity.

Peace

We meet in Cartagena at a moment of great concern about the foundations, policies and institutions that have maintained world peace for the past 70 years. Our first concern is the challenge to multilateralism that is a target of nationalists, populists and others who offer no alternative to global cooperation, because there is none. A retreat to a purely national security posture, a return to militarised security while abandoning human security, undermining the global trading system rather than improving it, diminishing already inadequate aid to the South, and side lining and underfunding the United Nations and its critical Charter-based work are steps that will make the world more dangerous for all. In an age of globalised threats, no one will be isolated from these dangers.

The Socialist International has long supported disarmament and reduced military spending, including R&D, and advocated greater resources for development to address the needs of the South and to close the North South divide. We renew that call with great urgency. Military leaders themselves recognise that security cannot be bought through increased military spending. The root causes of insecurity must be addressed. Conflict prevention must be strengthened. The role of women as peacemakers must be supported. We call on governments everywhere, especially those in the North, to reject militarised security and increased military spending which has long ago proved a dead end to meeting real security needs and human progress.

The Socialist International has been a strong advocate of the United Nations and its work since our modern founding conference. We call once again for strengthening the UN system, and in the context of peace, strengthening UN capacities for early warning and conflict prevention, peacekeeping, robust peacekeeping interventions, and humanitarian assistance especially for war related refugees and migrants. Directly related to peace is development assistance. We are dismayed that the world lags so far behind in development assistance spending targets for OECD countries. Closing the inequality gap is central to greater security and peace for all. In a week that the New York stock market reached an all-time high, we call on OECD governments to identify paths to quickly reach a minimum 1% GDP development assistance target, not including climate change mitigation and adaptation funding for the South.

Iraq and Syria

The terror carried out by ISIS is a major threat to international peace and security and to the people of the region. It must urgently be brought to an end. We renew our calls to the international community to unite in response, to support the government of Iraq as it works to strengthen and consolidate democracy and to support all Syrians striving for democracy, freedom and human rights. At least 13 million Syrians require humanitarian assistance. Nearly 5 million are refugees. The burden of refugee care is largely borne by Jordan and other neighbouring States. The Socialist International calls on the international community to urgently scale up support for UN and other humanitarian efforts and to seek a political and diplomatic end to the conflict with the full involvement of all Syrian actors. The Syrian people must decide on the final political solution which could include the democratic federalism proposed by the Democratic Syrian Council who should have a place in peace negotiations.

Yemen

The Socialist International expresses our deep concern about the ongoing war in Yemen. Yemen is now exposed to the risk of partition, terrorism and State failure. The Socialist International calls on all parties in Yemen to return to political dialogue and reject the use of violence. We call on all parties to abide by the output of the comprehensive national dialogue. All parties should have equal chance to participate in the upcoming dialogues.

Democratic Republic of Congo

The Socialist International calls upon the rest of the international community to assist in the organization of elections later this year. The Socialist International is ready to support this while calling for an environment of freedom, rights, release of political prisoners and inclusion of citizens forced to live in exile. We call on all opposition parties to join the electoral process and to help ensure a peaceful transition of power in 2017.

Cyprus

The Socialist International calls on both the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot leaders for the resumption of peace talks aiming to reach a bizonal, bicomunal federal solution for Cyprus as soon as possible. We regret that the peace talks in Cyprus are interrupted at the moment despite considerable progress by the two sides. We hope that the island of Cyprus will soon become an example of peaceful coexistence, cooperation and prosperity in the eastern Mediterranean.

Tunisia

The Socialist International salutes the advances in the democratic transition in Tunisia and calls on the international community to support Tunisia in efforts to address economic and social difficulties and the fragile construction of democracy. We call for an acceleration of democratic consolidation through constitutionally based good governance and anti-corruption reforms.

Libya

The Socialist International, aware of the positive efforts for peace in Libya and the region, calls on the UN to strengthen its efforts to re-establish peace in Libya and we note our support for all UN, AU and neighbouring country efforts

Caucasus

The Socialist International calls for increased dialogue to end hostilities, reduce tensions and armaments and build trust between Armenia and Azerbaijan. We call on the international community to support the ongoing efforts of the OSCE Minsk Group for a lasting peace in the region.

Iran

The Socialist International expresses concern about the violation of human rights and especially the deterioration of democratic rights in Iran, as well as discrimination against the Kurdish people. We support a peaceful solution to the Kurdish issues in Iran.

Ukraine

The Socialist International supports the speedy resolution of conflict in Ukraine based on the implementation of the Minsk Agreement.

Turkey

The Socialist International expresses our concern about the violation of human rights and deterioration of democracy in Turkey. We are particularly concerned about the arrest of thousands of activists, the detention of hundreds of elected municipal leaders and the detention of Selahattin Demirtas and Figen Yuksekdag. We call for their release and for new peace dialogues to address the democratic and human rights development of Turkey.

Myanmar

The Socialist International calls on the leadership and government of Myanmar to immediately end persecution and human rights violations against the Rohingya minority people and to open a full dialogue to address their minority rights and needs to be recognised and respected as full citizens.

Equality

Socialists, social democrats and the labour movement have long fought to address inequality. Conservatives believe inequality is a natural and even necessary part of the human condition. Classic liberals believe equality of opportunity is enough, even if rarely achieved. Our moral base and values reject these views. Our vision is of real equality in the enjoyment of dignity, citizenship, the economy, public goods and the global commons. This includes equality of genders, ethnic groups and faith communities, equality of young and old, and all levels of ability.

The Socialist International recognises that poverty and inequality are complex and multi-dimensional, including gender dimensions. This includes complex multi-dimensional poverty in the South and within highly developed societies. We recognise that structural change to the political economy is necessary to achieve these goals. It is not about creating a level playing field in current power relationships in most societies. Across the globe real reform and real change are necessary.

The Socialist International is committed to economies and expanding wealth that serve societies and human progress. We are dedicated to this through peaceful, democratic processes and oversight based on human rights and freedoms. And we are convinced that our member parties offer this hope to humanity.

The key elements to our approach are values based. We advocate clear goals of change and reform, transparency in public affairs and the private sector, accountability (fighting corruption private and public), the redistribution of power- to the people, and redistribution of wealth through investments in public goods and services that provide for human needs and peaceful, successful societies (this includes the arts, creativity, self-realization, ending alienation in the digital age, and opportunities for youth).

Reducing inequality requires access to free, public education. In turn, education must lead to meaningful secure employment. Workers` rights, promoted and defended by free Trade Unions, is a proven requirement for meaningful and secure employment and for reducing inequality.

For much of the world development is the key to reducing inequality, particularly for poverty reduction. Yet, development often increases inequality by benefiting elites (sometimes elites who have captured the State) only, leaving vast majorities with no benefit from development. This can be addressed through policy change and government intervention on behalf of the poor, especially to address complex dimensions of poverty with attention to gender, food security and nutrition, health care, education, sustainable agriculture, climate change adaptation, indigenous rights and other efforts.

Along with robust attention to complex poverty, political reform and redistribution of resources the Socialist International also calls on governments and others to end tax havens, take other measures to end illicit capital flows from South to North, especially in Africa, speed up land reform where necessary, take stronger steps against multi-national corporation, private sector and public sector corruption, strengthen gender based budgeting, raise minimum wages and end conflicts which undermine development and poverty reduction.

Solidarity

Solidarity is not a slogan. It means we stand together, now more than ever when forces of division are on the rise and so powerful. Stand together means - humanity as one. We are all citizens in a global reality. We are all refugees from the human conditions and history of want, violence, and fear. Our parties and movements stand together at this challenging time as never before.

We stand together North South. We stand together all faith communities and all cultural mosaics – rejecting false claims of clashes of civilizations. We stand together across generations embracing and empowering the next generation who must lead the world through coming perils and advances. We stand together both genders and all sexual minorities.

Our parties stand together as the Socialist International whose current accomplishments include standing with the peace process in Colombia, supporting democratic left unity in Greece, facilitating dialogue between Israelis and Palestinians, supporting the peaceful transfer of power in Gambia. We build on the proud foundations and accomplishments of past decades and herald even greater political activism and results in the term ahead. Activism that will benefit ordinary people, the marginalised and poor, the voiceless and dispossessed across the globe. We are the change, the reform, that the world needs and will need in coming times.

We welcome and call on others to join and to renew these commitments and our historic solidarity more vital to the world than at any time in 70 years.

We are in solidarity to combat and adapt to climate change. In 2015 we enthusiastically welcomed the Paris Agreement, particularly the 2 degrees Celsius commitment. We renew our call on all countries to enshrine their climate change obligations in national legislation.

We stand in solidarity with migrants entering Europe and being lost at sea. In the last months we noted European countries have failed in their commitments, and in their moral and international legal obligations, on refugees. We renew our call to the European Union to return to its founding values including the concept of shared responsibility.

We stand in solidarity with all those opposing populism and extreme right parties who inflame societies with hate and xenophobia. We stand in solidarity with all those, sometimes risking their lives, fighting for democracy, more freedom, more economic development, land and indigenous rights, press freedom, equality between men and women and for sexual minorities.

We fully support our member parties and governments in Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso, and Nigeria in their struggle to end terrorism and violence in the region.

We stand in solidarity with the Armenian people seeking dialogue with Turkey and we will continue to help , as agreed, a roundtable “How will Turkish recognition of the Armenia genocide allow a genuine reconciliation between Turkey and Armenia on the issue?”

The Socialist International joins all progressive Brazilians in their concerns about the removal of President Rousseff in 2016 and the subsequent reforms that have frozen public spending on social services for 20 years along with new social security and labour reforms.

Thanks

The delegates and leadership of the Socialist International greatly thank the Liberal Party of Colombia, the host city and people of Cartagena and everyone associated for an historically successful world Congress. The challenges and troubling times deserve our re-dedicated efforts drawing on our unshakable values, dedication to peace, equality and solidarity and guided by an eternal flame of hope for humanity.

Achieving greater equality in the national and global economy

“We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.”

That sentence, taken from America’s Declaration of Independence in 1776, was followed 13 years later by these words in Article 1 of France’s revolutionary Declaration of the Rights of Man:

"Men are born and remain free and equal in rights. Social distinctions may be founded only upon the general good."

In those two sentences--authored on two different continents in two different languages for two different peoples nearly 250 years ago--lie the origins of what we today, on all continents, simply assume are the natural rights we ought to enjoy.

Yet those rights are not rights all of us actually enjoy—even though they are what we at Socialist International, throughout our shared political history, have always fought for—as citizens of our nations and citizens of the world.

Here, in Cartagena, Colombia, representing the 153 member parties of Socialist International, we reaffirm our deep and unshakable belief in human equality and its power as the foundation, measure, and goal of all just societies, and in the irreducible right of all men and women equally to enjoy the fruits of their lives, their liberties, and their pursuit of happiness.

In this moment of insurgent right-wing neo-populism, we do not mean to stop with that affirmation. Instead we are gathered here first to challenge those reactionary forces and ideologies that still prevent billions of human beings from living lives of true equality and freedom. We next will articulate strategies and politics that will lead towards a better and more egalitarian future. Finally, we will express our fierce determination to confront those reactionary forces, again and again, until they are defeated, and universal rights are equally assured in every corner of this tiny planet.

We say this knowing that right-wing neo-populists, with alarming frequency, have begun assaulting democracies for their openness and tolerance---in the name of a frightened, inward-looking nationalism that pits us against one another, the rural against the urban, the newly-affluent against the “new poor”, college graduates against the high school leavers, “real” citizens against our new—and dangerously “different”—refugees and fellow citizens. In neo-populist fantasies, a dark, conspiratorial elite, on behalf of a satanic secular globalism, is threatening our traditional values, communities, and ways of life.

Longer History, Deeper Challenges

But these neo-populists, and the truly dark forces behind them, are anything but new—in fact they've been active, in fluctuating form and strength, for more than 150 years. That's why we know they won't deliver the prosperity or the security they promise--because they are congenital purveyors of false hopes, offering easy solutions that won't, in fact, work. Judging from the historical record, all their actual policies do guarantee is that the quite real economic, political and social advances that the poor, the working classes, and the middle classes worldwide have won over the past century will be eroded-- and potentially lost for a generation or more.

Neo-populism, however, is only one face of the powerful forces at work on the global right today.

Behind these parties and their leaders are deeply-embedded forms of privilege and exploitation that have, for far too long, favored men over women, the strong over the weak, the violent over the peaceable, the rich over the poor, the North over the South, the West over the Rest.

Those hierarchies have survived by relying, in turn, on the many forms of deep prejudice that condemn billions of our fellow humans to far less than full equality and freedom, not because of their character or actions, but because of their race, or the region, ethnicity or nationality, religion or class into which they were born.

Those sorts of prejudices have, century after century, generated powerful social, economic, and political relationships and institutions—expressed at one level in repressive laws and customs, and at another in judgmental daily attitudes about those not like “us”.

Generation after generation, children have been (and still are) born into these worlds built on such prejudices, and been forced to live stunted lives that the powerful have endlessly insisted are the only lives they can expect---even though these sorts of societies, constructed to benefit the few in the name of the many--violate the most fundamental tenets of human equality and liberty.

The Centrality of Economic Inequality—and the Power of More Equality

There is a third overarching issue that we will address here—the issue of income and wealth inequalities, both between citizens of individual nations and between all citizens, spread across all the nations of the world. Today, we know more about the shape and scope of these inequalities than ever before—and know far more about their consequences, both in worsening the prejudices that underpin hierarchies of exploitation, and in fostering the neo-populism that threatens so many of our hard-won achievements.

In recent years, economists such as Thomas Piketty and Anthony Atkinson have reawakened progressives worldwide to the central role our policies toward income and wealth effect equality in a successful future. In fact, we believe that with their laser-like focus on the harms of inequalities, and their carefully-gathered evidence that inequality is growing worse, these economists will in the coming years serve the role Lord Keynes and his work on aggregate demand played in the 20th century by defining government's responsibility for macro-demand.

This new distribution paradigm is so central that we can no longer accept GDP goals of, say, 4% or 5% or 6% growth--if 90 or 80 or 70 or 60% of that GDP's growth go to the top 1, 2, or 3%. When fewer than a dozen mega-rich billionaires are together wealthier than the bottom half of humanity three billion people---then this is a matter of paramount political and moral, not just economic, importance for us all.

How Did We Lose Sight of Economic Equality's Importance?

For several decades after World War II, the issue of economic inequality actually took a back seat in aggregate growth in the West, as variants of Keynesianism supplanted the more conservative, market-led (and often anti-state and anti-labor) assumptions of 19th century Neoclassical economics. Across the developed world, state-enhanced and regulated market economics kept paying off: aggregate growth rates were high and far more stable, with smaller and shorter recessions than in the “free market” years before World War II years).

What's more, with sharply-progressive income and wealth taxes, and more and more spending on public goods that accelerated upward mobility, as well as legal assaults against racial and gender inequalities, more and more income equality came almost “naturally” with this GDP growth—or so it seemed at the time. There was, in simple terms, more of everything for more people, more fairly distributed than in any other time in modern human history.

The sharp rise of public spending (with most of it on social welfare, from education to retirement to health) ended up doubling democratic governments' share of GDP to nearly 40%, and stirred howls and cries of “socialism” from conservatives.

For ultra-conservatives such as Friedrich Hayek and Milton Friedman, all this public spending was doubly baleful because they thought it meant constant inflation, soaring government debt, crowding out of private investment and eventually the loss of individual freedom. (All this represented, in Hayek's famous phrase, “the road to serfdom”.) Yet for most inhabitants of the OECD countries reality kept defying Hayek's and Friedman's predictions. In fact there was good reason, as Piketty reminds us, to call the three decades after World War II as “les trentes glorieuses”---the thirty glorious years, and very definitely not a road to serfdom.

For democratic socialist and social-democratic parties in the West, these decades were politically “glorious years” as well. In many advanced countries, progressive parties were elected to government, while the old prewar rightist parties languished (or collapsed) and the newer center-right parties either helped progressive pass or didn't try to repeal landmark social welfare and economic regulation legislation that the left had long sought as bellwethers of more equal, more just societies.

The Cold War's sharp divisions, because Soviet and Chinese communism were strongly opposed by Western socialists and social democrats, expanded the space for the non-communist left. Meanwhile, in the rapidly-decolonizing South, the Cold War created political space as well, allowing progressive parties to challenge traditional right and center-right competitors—although the process of building progressive governments was often stalled or reversed by repression in the name of anti-communism.

Still, by the 1970s, in Latin America, Asia, even sub-Saharan Africa, there were good reasons to believe that “the Third World” was poised for real democratization and rapid economic development--but then suddenly in the 1980s the “glorious years” ended—at least for that progress and for the left. For a resurgent right, however, the good times were just beginning.

In the US and Western Europe, Keynesianism and an activist progressive state came under relentless assault. Where nominally “left” governments survived, they found themselves constrained by the forces of neoliberalism. Working-class unions—long a backbone of progressive politics—began a sharp decline in membership, while corporations and finance gained enormous new influence, prestige, and wealth. Politicians across the spectrum embraced lower taxes, less regulation, more global trade and output, and more authority and influence for business. “Government,” in Reagan's famous formulation, “isn't the solution; it's the problem.” The era of neoliberal globalization was underway.

In the West, left parties began a slow eclipse---either as governing parties or ideologically, as left rather than neoliberal parties. In the Communist East, the Soviet Union and China would begin their unsteady lurch away from detailed, top-down state planning of the economy in favor of an eclectic, often chaotic, amalgam of socialist and capitalist tendencies, labeled perestroika in Moscow and “socialism with capitalist characteristics” in Beijing. By the 1990s, the USSR was gone, and China was changing in once- unimaginable ways.

Across the South, growth plunged and inequalities worsened as the IMF and World Bank effectively imposed textbook neoclassical models on fragile and semi-modern, semi-developing economies. Budgets were forcibly balanced (most often by cutting health, education, and public welfare spending). Trade barriers were removed to allow cheap foreign goods into local markets without regard for the impact on local farmers, small manufacturers, and traditional retailers, as well (needless to say) as on workers and their families.

After the evidence of a “lost decade” of development in the global South became simply overwhelming, the Bank and IMF “apologized”, and curtailed their authoritarian neoliberalism. Now their mantra was “growth with poverty reduction”, an uneasy hybridization that has shown mixed results so far.

Why We Must Reclaim Economic Equality as Our Goal—and How

Fast forward to 2017. The 1980s surge of pro-corporate conservatism suffered repeated reversals, none greater than the Great Recession that began unfolding in 2008, which has left in its wake nearly a decade of slowed global growth. At the heart of neo-populism’s rise, and of growing discontent--across the political spectrum—has been an increasing disillusionment with GDP-measured “economic growth” that policy makers and academics have decreed to be the apogee of modern life, because so many have been excluded from that growth. But populism’s essential reactionary conservatism resides in its blaming foreign workers and progressive cultural elites for this situation—rather than understanding how global market forces have done far more to create this intolerable reality. Globalization has unquestionably had an impact on the global distribution of income—in ways well understood by now. What has been lacking is not diagnosis but solutions—solutions that Socialist International can provide.

What is needed?

The first essential is to recognize that nations generate not just national but international growth through trade and investment abroad, by the import and export of goods and services, and by its citizens and firms working outside its borders.

The challenge now is to promote growth that is both deep and broad—that is, growth that produces stable, long-term output, jobs that are also stable, well-paid, and long-term, and profits that reward owners and investors and also provide fiscal flows to governments so they can carry out their essential public welfare functions.

In the 21st century’s globalizing world, that deep and broad growth also requires coordination and cooperation across borders around a core set of principles that in turn will work to sustain and enlarge global growth in a “virtuous circle”.

What sorts of principles?

First, our commitment to radically and systematically reducing racial, ethnic, and gender biases. As well as being important moral and political goals, reducing these forms of discrimination will simultaneously promote economic equality and economic growth.

Second, our determination to democratize and publicize evidence-based measures of institutional performance and outcomes on the national, regional, and local levels. As the internet spreads worldwide, democratic governments should encourage NGOs and citizens to

use public data to constantly assess the performance of public and private institutions across a broad range of metrics.

Third, our determined focus for the rest of the 21st century on insuring accurate and timely reporting of income and wealth as the elementary essential gauge of national economic performance.

Virtually all 200 nations today publish regular reports of their GDP---but fewer than half systematically collect and report on the distribution of that GDP as the wealth and income of its citizens (and fewer than a quarter prepare generally accurate reports). We call on all nations to regularly collect and publish, along with GDP data, Gini and Atkinson measures of inequality (ii).

There is a **fourth** related set of principles: our clear understanding that economic inequality isn't just an "economic issue".

Income and wealth inequalities corrode the chances for a just society, by systematically lowering students' educational performance, raising crime rates, multiplying distrust of governments and fellow citizens, allowing pollution, ignoring illness, fostering obesity, amplifying violence against women and children, and blocking upward mobility. Studies like The Spirit Level contain an array of examples that should be reframed as DSIs---Domestic Social Indicators---that, analogous to GDP in economics, become a nation's annual indices of well-being performance (iii).

Fifth, we commit ourselves and our governments to increasing both the information and regulation of income and wealth flows across borders. As global financialization has accelerated, it has created systemic challenges for modern democracies, not least through the vast "offshoring" of individual and corporate wealth and income beyond the reach of governments. Some experts now estimate that offshore wealth alone exceeds \$25 TRILLION—more than the combined GDP of three-quarters of the nations of the world. Offshored income figures are no less astonishing.

Solutions here are multipronged, and call for:

1. standardization of income and wealth surveys nationally, with special attention to accurate reporting of top level groups ("the 1%" who control nearly half the world's private financial wealth);
2. strictly-enforced transparency requirements for all "shell" corporations and trusts, and a policy prohibition toward "tax havens";
3. strong monitoring and controls over cross-national financial transfers, including much stricter auditing of transfer pricing by multinational firms;
4. strong reporting requirements for banks of all significant international financial transfers;
5. regular intergovernmental exchanges of these crucial data;
6. much stronger regulation and enforcement of illegal cross-border financial transfers.

There are more, and more detailed, recommendations we at Socialist International intend to advance going forward---but these are preliminary essentials, both in terms of principles and in terms of policies and mechanisms meant to realize those principles.

The world is moving swiftly toward authentic globalization, in which citizens of nations around the world will come to know the lives and values by which others live. One clear benefit of that process is the steady globalization of rights, including equality as a core essential right, as the number of democracies grows steadily.

But the equally clear danger of globalization is that it will worsen inequalities of all kinds, not lessen them---and in the process will nurture the fundamentally authoritarian politics we see emerging in neo- populist parties and governments around the world.

Equality for us is thus not a lofty value or abstract right—but a compelling organizing principle for our work politically in the decades ahead. Re-centering our politics around that principle by recognizing that as socialist parties we can no longer simply promote economic growth and assume that such growth will “solve” issues of inequality.

We live in an anomalous time, when some of the most rapid economic growth is happening in some of the world’s most authoritarian—and kleptocratic—countries. Our duty—our opportunity—is to expand what we have, through our democratic socialist parties and values, actually built: the modern foundations for a democratic and egalitarian world.

We intend to keep building that world.

Declaration in support of Mexico

Original: Spanish

On 25 January 2016, only five days after his inauguration as President of the United States of America, Donald Trump signed an executive order for the construction of a wall on the border with the United Mexican States in order to prevent the irregular entry of citizens of Mexico and of other Ibero-American countries into the United States of America.

Since the executive order was signed, Trump has repeatedly reaffirmed his intention that the cost of the wall (estimated at between US\$10,000 million and \$25,000 million) will be "directly or indirectly" borne by Mexico and is even considering a 20% tariff on imports from Mexico, stating, inter alia, that such an approach would offset the cost of the wall in a short space of time.

As President of the United States of America, these actions and statements are a manifestation of the attitude of contempt that Trump has shown towards people of Hispanic and Latin American origin throughout the electoral period. This is not just an attack on Mexico and Mexicans, but also an attack on the entire Ibero-American Community and as such, the entire international community.

These acts have serious consequences, and the Congress of the Socialist International cannot remain on the sidelines in the face of such acts. As socialists, we cannot allow any country to be treated with contempt, especially Mexico today, a sovereign country that cannot have its dignity humiliated.

We must remember that the United States of America has always managed its borders and set a high level of requirements for its trade and other relations. Other international actors have always respected the interests of the United States of America. It is out of place to be treated or to have a relationship that is not respectful and equal. Donald Trump must realise that understanding and dialogue – rather than contempt and threats – with his neighbours from the South and allies are not just in the interests of his own country, but also of the entire international community.

The XXV Congress of the Socialist International:

- Expresses its firm solidarity with the United Mexican States, faced with contemptuous treatment through the actions and statements of the President of the United States, Donald Trump.

- Condemns President Trump's decision to build a wall between the border of Mexico and the United States of America and any action to economically penalise Mexicans in order to meet the cost of constructing such wall.
- Urges the immediate convocation of a meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Ibero-American Community of Nations in Mexico to address this issue jointly and to promote a common position in support of Mexico.

Declaration on Puerto Rico

Original: Spanish

From the moment in which the Puerto Rican Independence Party (PIP) joined the Socialist International (SI) in the Albufeira Congress in 1983, the SI categorically expressed its support for the independence of Puerto Rico. By doing this, in spite of the big pressures put onto them at that time when the Cold War had reached its peak, the SI honoured its commitment to its principles and to the cause of decolonisation and the right of peoples to their self-determination and independence.

As from that point in time, the SI has reiterated on many occasions their support for Independence and has expressed its views on the developments that have marked the course of events in Puerto Rico. Today, we are especially satisfied to be able to celebrate that the then President Obama listened to the world's voice –including the demands made by the SI – and finally decided just a few weeks ago, to free the Puerto Rican fighter for independence Oscar López Rivera who had been in jail for more than thirty five years accused of the crime of seditious conspiracy.

During the years since the Congress in Albufeira, the solidarity of the SI with the Puerto Rican Independence Party and with the cause of Puerto Rican independence has taken different forms among which there are the testimonials of the current SI President and of several Chairs of the Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean (SICLAC) before the Special Committee on Decolonisation of the United Nations, and the continuous election as from 2000 in the Paris Congress of Rubén Berríos Martínez, President of the PIP, as an Honorary President of the SI.

In the year of 2016, after ten years of an overwhelming economic depression originated by the inability of the colonial model to promote economic growth, the loss of more than 10 per cent of the population due to an unbridled migration, and the declared insolvency of the national treasury, the United States Congress has unilaterally decided to resume direct control of the government of Puerto Rico, reducing even more the meagre spaces of self-government of the colonial territory.

Instead of responding to the claims expressed in a referendum in 2012 in which a clear majority of the electorate manifested to be against the continuation of the colonial regime, the reply of Congress has been to create a Board of Fiscal Supervision, appointed by the President of the United States, to exercise all-embracing powers over any legal or executive decision of an economic or fiscal nature by the government of Puerto Rico, and to be able to impose their criteria over the elected officials of the Puerto Rican government.

Just in case that anyone had any doubts about the powers of the Congress to approve such a control mechanism, the US Supreme Court, on the same day (9 June 2016) in which the Congress approved the law for the creation of the Board of Supervision, issued an historical decision, in line with the request of the US President, that affirms the plenary powers of Congress to govern Puerto Rico, and reaffirming that Puerto Rico is nothing more than a possession of the USA in which any partial concession of self-government may be revoked unilaterally by the Congress, at its sole discretion.

Considering these dangerous and worrying developments, the SI Congress meeting in Cartagena, Colombia, agrees the following:

- To reiterate our support for the inalienable right of the People of Puerto Rico to their self-determination and Independence in accordance with Resolution 1514 (XV) of the United Nations.
- To urge the Government and the Congress of the United States to fully comply with their decolonising obligations in relation to Puerto Rico and not to hinder in any way the celebration of a plebiscite convened by the Legislative Assembly of Puerto Rico among the alternatives contemplated in Resolution 1541 (XV) of the United Nations.
- To support the repeated claims made by the Decolonisation Committee of the United Nations that the General Assembly of the United Nations fully examine the case of Puerto Rico and pronounce itself on the matter.
- To congratulate the Puerto Rican Independence Party on its perseverance defending the cause of independence and the political and ethical values of social democracy, and to express their trust that the political initiatives carried out by the PIP will help to set in motion a process that will finally take Puerto Rico towards its decolonisation and independence.

Resolution on Venezuela

Original: Spanish

The World Congress of the Socialist International, meeting in Cartagena on 2-4 March 2017 reiterates once again its deep concern at the serious political, economic and social crisis affecting Venezuela as a consequence of misguided economic and social policies as well as of authoritarian attitudes that violate not only the democratic principles that we share in the Socialist International, but is also a systematic violation of human rights, giving shape to a state policy that we strongly reject.

The Socialist International once more urges President Nicolás Maduro to free all political prisoners, and to respect the National Assembly and the immunity of its parliamentarians. In democracy, the autonomy of powers is a fundamental principle. Making use of one power against another undermines and compromises their principles and values which are based on the respect, the balance, and the autonomy of such powers.

The Socialist International, deeply concerned, demands of the government of Nicolás Maduro to comply with the agreements reached at the negotiating table under the auspices of UNASUR, the Vatican and the ex-Presidents José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero, Martín Torrijos and Leonel Fernández, in regard to the opening of a humanitarian corridor, the liberation of political prisoners, the recognition of the autonomy of powers and, above all, the constitutional observance of the celebration of electoral processes established specifically in the Constitution, to which the international community and the Socialist International have contributed, in order to achieve a political and peaceful solution to the serious crisis affecting Venezuela.

Declaration on the question of Palestine

The Council of the Socialist International, meeting in Cartagena, Colombia, on 1-3 March, 2017, held discussions based on the theme “for a world in peace, with equality and solidarity”. This includes the Question of Palestine, that this year marks anniversaries, including 100 years of the Balfour Declaration and 50 years of the 1967 occupation, that reaffirm the urgent need to achieve a just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

Recalling its previous declarations of the SI, in particular the SI Councils in New York in June 2010, in Istanbul in November 2013, on December 2014, in July 2015, and in Geneva, July 2016.

SI Reaffirms its support for the two-state solution, ending the Israeli occupation and reaching a just and lasting peace based in international law

- 1. Reaffirms the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, including the right to their independent State of Palestine on the June 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital, and reaffirms its commitment, in accordance with international law, to bringing a complete end to the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian state that started in 1967 in order to achieve the two- state solution, as two sovereign and democratic states for all their citizens, as well as a solution to all final status issues, including the refugee issue, based on international law and UN resolutions.
- 2. Welcomes the French Efforts for a multilateral frame for the Middle East Peace Process, based on international law and UN resolutions. Such efforts must include a clear timeframe, terms of reference based on international law and a mechanism of implementation, including accountability.
- 3. Recognizes the Arab Peace Initiative as the only possible regional framework for normalization of relations between Israel and the rest of the region once a final status agreement between Israel and Palestine is achieved, fulfilling the internationally recognized rights of the Palestinian people under international law.
- 4. Calls upon the US administration to express its unequivocal support for the two-state solution on the 1967 border, reaffirming the illegality of Israeli settlements and the right of Israelis and Palestinians to live in peace, freedom, security, justice and equality. Also calls upon the US Administration not to take actions that go against UN resolutions and that reward the anti- peace agenda of the Israeli government, including moving its embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem.

SI Calls for the full implementation of International Humanitarian Law

- 5. Demands from Israel, the occupying power, the full implementation of its obligations under international law, including the IV Geneva Convention. We also call upon the international community to take concrete steps in order to protect the civilian population affected by grave violations of international humanitarian law.
- 6. Condemns all measures aimed at altering the demographic composition, character and status of all the territory occupied by Israel since 1967, including inter alia, the construction and expansion of Israeli settlements, a violation of international law, including the illegal Annexation Wall as well as the Israeli policy of home demolitions of Palestinians, as well as all policies of forcible displacement of civilians. We demand a total cessation of such activities.
- 7. Calls for the implementation of UNSC Resolution 2334, of December 23rd 2016, that reaffirms the illegality of Israeli settlements, by taking concrete measures against Israel's colonial- settlement enterprise in Occupied Palestine, such as banning settlement products, including services, supporting Palestinian communities under threat and supporting the efforts to issue a public list of companies that profit from the Israeli colonial-settlement project in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

SI calls to end the blockade of Gaza and to release political prisoners

- 8. Demands an end to the illegal blockade against 2 million Palestinians in Gaza. It also calls for the release of all Palestinian political prisoners, including elected members of

the Palestinian Parliament such as the member of the Fatah Central Committee Marwan Barghouti, as well as all administrative detainees and children.

SI supports the role of Israeli, Palestinian and International Human Rights Organizations

- 9. Salutes the efforts of progressive sectors within Israel, including civil society groups such as Btselem and Breaking the Silence, that have been targets of vicious attacks and persecution from the current Israeli government.
- 10. Denounces threats against Palestinian civil society groups, particularly Al Haq, for their involvement with the International Criminal Court. We also condemn the difficulties imposed by Israel against the work of international human rights organizations such as Human Rights Watch.
- 11. Calls upon all SI members to support the work of Palestinian and Israeli Civil Society groups working for a just and lasting peace, including the implementation of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights.

SI Calls upon the Israeli Government to end its discrimination against its non-Jewish population

- 12. Calls upon the Israeli Parliament to revoke in its entirety dozens of discriminatory laws against its Arab-Palestinian citizens that compose over 20% of Israel's population, particularly the Citizenship Law that has divided thousands of families only because of their Arab, Christian or Muslim origin. We express our concern over the situation of the non-Jewish citizens of Israel, including the threat of demolishing their homes and villages, such as the demolition of Um-Al- Hiran village in the Naqab/Negev area.

SI Calls upon its members to take action: End the Israeli Occupation and Recognize the State of Palestine

- 13. Calls upon all governments that haven't recognized the State of Palestine on the 1967 border, and particularly those led by members of SI, to do so as an investment in peace between Israelis and Palestinians, saving the two-state solution and the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination.
- 14. SI calls upon all its members to present, help and adopt in their national parliaments, resolutions calling to end the Israeli occupation of Palestine that began in June 1967.

Declaration on Mauritania

Original: French

We, members of the Socialist International (SI), gathered at the XXV SI Congress in Cartagena, Colombia, on 2, 3 and 4 March 2017, follow with great concern the recent developments that characterize the increasingly tense political scene in Mauritania, due to the intention of the undemocratic regime that has led the country since the 2008 coup to deliberately change the constitution without any national consensus.

After failing to organize a referendum on introducing the changes, faced with the rejection of such a project by the political forces of the Mauritanian opposition, particularly the RFD, a member of the SI and at the forefront of the struggle for democracy in Mauritania, and with the rejection by civil society organizations, opinion leaders and Mauritanian citizens, the government in Mauritania is in the process, yet again, of tampering with the constitution in order to tailor it to its own ends, by bringing together the two illegitimate chambers of

parliament, namely a Senate whose term of office has largely expired and a National Assembly elected in non-transparent conditions and boycotted by the majority of the opposition.

These constitutional changes currently being put in place further undermine what remains of the fragile national unity and further delays the implementation of the rule of law that the country so badly needs. There is no explanation for this forcing, other than the will of the country's leaders to maintain themselves in power by any means they can and to avoid any possibility of any eventual prosecution in the future for their misdeeds in the catastrophic political, economic and social governance they are subjecting the Mauritanian people to.

Faced with the obstinate persistence of the ruling regime in Mauritania to lead the country towards uncertain horizons, and considering the major risks posed to the country as a consequence, in particular the disturbances and instability observed in other countries that have gone through similar situations of unresolved political crises, the Socialist International reiterates its unwavering solidarity with the RFD and all the democrats in Mauritania in their struggle to prevent any constitutional amendment in form or content, at a time when the national political scene is experiencing unprecedented tension.

Initiative of the Socialist International regarding the Armenian Genocide

After the last Socialist International Congress, the world marked the Centennial of the Armenian Genocide and witnessed a number of new countries, heads of states and international organizations officially recognising this crime against all humanity.

The 2014 December SI Council Meeting in Geneva, recognising the continued worldwide progress on this human rights and genocide prevention issue, appropriately placed the Armenian Genocide on the agenda of its first Council in 2015, held one hundred years after the start of this atrocity.

The July 2015 Council Meeting in New York endorsed an agreement reached earlier by the SI Vice- Presidents from Armenia and Turkey, for the Socialist International to organise a special hearing or round-table discussion around the theme: "How Turkish recognition of the Armenian Genocide can contribute to a genuine reconciliation between Turkey and Armenia?" This meeting was to have included the participation of representatives of SI member parties in both Armenia and Turkey, as well as other interested member parties, and specially invited experts, NGOs, and others.

Consistent with both past decisions on this matter and the SI's longstanding support for a just resolution of the Armenian Genocide, the SI XXV Congress reaffirms its readiness to work with our Armenian and Turkish member parties to facilitate a hearing or round-table discussion regarding the benefits of Turkey's recognition of the Armenian Genocide for reconciliation between Armenians and Turks.

Declaration on legal restrictions on Latin American political leaders

Original: Spanish

The SI Congress expresses its concern at the increase in politically motivated court cases in Latin America and the Caribbean. The Congress underlines the central role of the judiciary in the proper functioning of democracy and calls for an end to its instrumentalisation. The Congress reiterates its solidarity with those who have suffered restrictions to their rights for political reasons and condemns the prosecution of representatives of its member parties in Latin America, in particular those in opposition, as in the case in Paraguay with Rafael Filizzola, President of the Progressive Democratic Party (PDP), and in Bolivia with Samuel Doria Medina, President of the National Unity Front (UN). In Bolivia, the legal restrictions that have been

imposed, coupled with the decision by President Evo Morales to seek a new presidential term, ignoring the outcome of the referendum of 21 February 2016, are cause for concern to the SI in regard to Bolivian democracy.

Resolution empowering the Council to make changes to the statutes

Our Congress empowers the next Councils to make the necessary changes to the statutes which will allow for the implementation of the principle of having an equal number of men and women at all levels of the organisation, as well as the setting up of a Committee on Equality and its mandate.

Change to the statutes agreed by the Congress

To include under Point 5 of the statutes:

Our objective is to have an equal number of men and women at all levels of our organization. Equality between men and women is an issue of Human Rights for our movement.

To ensure the representation of women within the SI Presidium, as stated by the statutes, in case of difficulties the SIW will be consulted.



The last vestiges of democracy have fallen in Venezuela

30 March 2017

The decision that has just been adopted by the Supreme Court (TSJ) of Venezuela, declaring the National Assembly - nothing less than the legislative branch of power in the country - in contempt, and announcing that the Supreme Court is to simultaneously assume the functions of this institution of government, goes beyond the mere denial of the Assembly, it is a critical blow to the last vestiges of democracy in that Latin American nation.

Democracy exists when there is a clear division of the powers of the State, and for some considerable time, the citizens of Venezuela have been observing how this has been violated, while their freedoms and rights were being restricted and the consequences of a grave

political, social, humanitarian, human security and health crisis were deepening. This crisis has inexorably hit the people in Venezuela following poor, authoritarian and centralised leadership that is indifferent to the suffering caused by its actions.

At a time when international public opinion is aware of the efforts of multilateral organisations such as the Organization of American States (OAS) to enable a minimal level of guidelines and respect for values and principles that are shared, not just by the peoples of Latin American and the Caribbean but also around the world, to prevail in Venezuela, democrats in every continent today find the concentration of power in Venezuela, the abuses of its citizens' freedoms and rights, the existence of political prisoners and the shortages that are fatally affecting the country's population every day, to be unacceptable.

In view of the gravity of what is happening in Venezuela today, the Socialist International condemns and denounces, with force and conviction, the decision of the Supreme Court – whose composition in the latter stages of the mandate of the previous Assembly had already been seriously challenged – and joins in the demands of Venezuela's democratic forces for the immediate restoration of the separation of the powers of the State as established in its Constitution. The Socialist International calls for an end to the denial, obstacles and impediments so that the National Assembly of Venezuela, elected by all Venezuelan citizens, can immediately resume its legislative work, with full recognition of its members' parliamentary immunity; for the immediate release of all political prisoners, many of which have already been held in the regime's prisons for numerous years, because while there are political prisoners, there is no democracy; and for the urgent establishment of an electoral timetable, because in a democracy it is the people who choose their leaders, through elections that must be fair, free and regularly held.

Today, after the achievements of recent decades, finally, citizens from all corners of the globe deliver and legitimise, with their will and enthusiasm, political systems that allow for the construction and preservation of democracy. No one, nowhere, not even in Venezuela, can seek to escape, hide and flee from their obligations and to claim that the rest of the world does not have a right to voice its opinion.

The Government of Venezuela and Nicolás Maduro have today an enormous responsibility and must act now, not tomorrow.

Democracy can only be protected and advanced when in full view of the people and its institutions

2 April 2017

The violent demonstrations that have occurred in recent days in Paraguay have generated serious concern in the region and the international community, and exposed a widely known truth, that democracy can only be protected and advanced when it is in full view of the people, in front of the nation and with full respect for its institutions.

The discussion and processing of the constitutional amendments aimed at changing the rule of non re-election of the Head of State, which was established in 1992 after the end of a long period of authoritarianism under General Stroessner, has, at the very least, and on a matter that is so close to the soul and historical memory of the citizens of that country, lacked the necessary transparency, a frank and open discussion with the public opinion and respect for the established parliamentary rules. This is why Paraguay, as well as the democratic international community, must lament today the serious, violent demonstrations that have caused the tragic death of the young PLRA leader, Rodrigo Quintana, the shocking and grave

bullet attack on the Member of Parliament Edgar Acosta, and along with them, a large number of casualties due to the excessive use of force by the police, and numerous detainees in disturbances that involved many demonstrators in circumstances that can never be justified, but that originate in the civil unrest relating to the manner in which this process of constitutional reforms has been carried out.

The Socialist International, along with condemning these serious acts of violence and the excessive, and in this case criminal, use of police force, calls on the Paraguayan government authorities to act respecting and protecting the constitutional framework of democracy, to respect the rights and the life of the political opposition, to respect the current regulations of the rule of law and the norms that regulate the political and democratic life of the country, which today are the result of the efforts and sacrifices made by so many Paraguayans who struggled for generations for the rights and freedoms of all their fellow citizens. We further call on the government authorities to conduct the national debate and the functioning of the political institutions of the State and their officials with openness and transparency and to live up to the historical responsibility that lies with those who today have in their hands the destiny of that nation which should never again go back to the past.

SI at the 136th IPU Assembly in Dhaka, Bangladesh

2 April 2017



On the occasion of the 136th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) held in Dhaka, Bangladesh, from 1 to 5 April 2017, the Socialist International held a meeting of parliamentarians attending the Assembly from our global political family.

Chaired by the SI Secretary General, the meeting on 2 April included representatives from all continents, who met to exchange views on the key issues being addressed by this Assembly of the IPU and to share information on developments and issues of concern affecting their countries.

SI condemns the latest abduction and detention of Mikalai Statkevich

29 April 2017

The Socialist International vigorously protests against the latest abduction by government security agents and detention of Mikalai Statkevich, leader of the Belarusian Social Democratic Party NH, an SI member party, ahead of the forthcoming May Day celebrations planned to take place in Minsk. Since his sudden disappearance yesterday, it has been reported that he has been secretly charged, and will be held for five days.

Recalling his violent abduction last month, and equally that of other members of the BSDP-NH, it is clear that these repeated acts of intimidation and violence by the regime will not deter the democratic opposition, or indeed any of the citizens of Belarus, from demanding their full rights and freedoms.

The holding of political prisoners anywhere in the world is a crime in face of which our International will never remain silent. Our global voice is united in calling for the immediate release of Mikalai Statkevich and all the political prisoners being held illegally in Belarus.

SI Secretary General forced out of the DRC by Kabila regime

15 May 2017

Responding to an invitation by the leadership of the UDPS of the Democratic Republic of Congo, the SI Secretary General Luis Ayala arrived to Kinshasa on Friday 12 May to convey the Socialist International's solidarity with the party and family of their deceased leader Etienne Tshisekedi, and to express the support of the organisation for their efforts and those of other political forces engaged in moving forward a transition to democracy in the country. However, agents of the regime were waiting for him at the airport upon arrival to ensure that he would not enter the country and, despite his protests, withheld his passport and forced him back to the aircraft upon which he had arrived. This action by the government of Kabila, which the Socialist International condemns, reflects once more the reality under which the people of the Democratic Republic of Congo and the political opposition live today.

The situation in the country has gravely deteriorated following recent developments which have seen the government depart from the political agreements signed last December with the main forces of the opposition aimed at finally bringing democracy and peace to Congo.

Key elements of the agreement have not been honoured by President Kabila, such as the formation of an interim government of national unity following the failure to hold elections last year prior to the expiry of his term in office, and his recent appointment of a Prime Minister without the consent of the opposition. The non-observance of the accords and the lack of perspective for progress has had several consequences in an already tense political climate in the country, and has led to the withdrawal of the Episcopal Conference of Congo (CENCO) as a facilitator for dialogue between the government and the opposition.

In the midst of these political developments, a central issue on the minds of millions of Congolese citizens has been the attitude of the regime following the death in Brussels last February of Etienne Tshisekedi, the much respected leader of the opposition, a former Prime Minister, President of the UDPS, an SI member party, and who was chosen to lead a Council created to oversee the agreements. The government has repeatedly obstructed the repatriation and interment of his remains in Kinshasa, which millions of people have been waiting for in

anticipation. Friday 12 May was the third date that had been scheduled for this to happen and subsequently cancelled, following previous attempts in February and March, due to the regime's obstructions.

The Socialist International, which emphatically deplores the position adopted by the President and his government, will continue to attentively follow political developments in the Democratic Republic of Congo and to support all those struggling for their freedoms and rights to build a democracy that works for all citizens.

Standing with Manchester

23 May 2017

The entire global family of our International condemns in the deepest terms the abhorrent and heinous attack that was executed last night upon children and families attending a music concert in Manchester.

Targeting children, the most innocent of all civilians, so directly, is unspeakable, and it is utterly devastating that children as young as 8 years were among the 22 that were killed.

As with all terrorist attacks, the outcome of this atrocity has served no purpose except to more strongly unite people, communities and nations together against such perpetrators. This act strengthens our determination to overcome terrorism and to never cease in our resolve to defeat those who attempt to destroy our democracies, and take our rights and freedoms.

The International extends its heartfelt sympathy to the victims and families of the attack, to all the people of Manchester and the United Kingdom.

SI condemns sentencing of opposition MP Enis Berberoğlu

16 June 2017

The Socialist International vigorously condemns the sentencing and arrest of Enis Berberoğlu, a member of parliament of the CHP, an SI member party, for allegedly revealing information about the secret supply of arms to Syria by Turkey's intelligence agency MIT.

Our International deeply deplores this latest act by the Erdoğan regime to silence the opposition and reaffirms its full support and solidarity with its members in Turkey. The Socialist International stands shoulder to shoulder with CHP leader Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu as he, along with members of the opposition, undertakes a protest march from Ankara to Istanbul demanding Justice.

Profoundly concerned by the continuing serious deterioration of rights and freedoms in Turkey following the crackdown initiated last July after the failed coup, the Socialist International raises its voice against such acts of injustice and intimidation, against the lack of freedom of expression, the lack of parliamentary immunity, and the lack of an independent judiciary. We call on the authorities to fully respect the rights of its people and for the release of all the detained parliamentarians, along with the scores of other citizens who are being held unjustly for political reasons.

Meeting of the Socialist International Council at the United Nations in New York

Strengthening Multilateralism for Peace

11-12 July 2017



On 11-12 July 2017 the SI Council held its first meeting after the XXV Congress, returning to the United Nations headquarters for two days of discussions on strengthening multilateralism, reaffirming social democratic values and defending democracy.

The Council was also the first occasion upon which the SI had met at the UN since the election of the new UN Secretary-General, António Guterres. A former president of the Socialist International, Guterres participated as a special guest during the opening session in which he outlined his vision for the work of the UN, before inviting comments and questions from delegates in an interactive dialogue.

Introducing António Guterres at the opening of the meeting, SI Secretary General Luis Ayala said that all those present were very pleased to have the opportunity to directly hear the views of the UN Secretary-General, particularly at this time when we were entering a new inter-Congress period and we would continue to work for solutions to the same global challenges confronted by the UN. He congratulated Guterres on his new role and thanked him warmly for having accepted the invitation to come and engage in a conversation with members of the global social democratic political family.

António Guterres expressed his pleasure to be able to take part in this SI Council meeting and to share global concerns with this political gathering. He perceived a deficit of trust in the world, between peoples, countries and institutions, which was linked to the difficulties associated with globalisation. The UN's agenda 2030 was part of a drive to make globalisation fairer, and ensure that no-one was left behind. He underlined the importance of the work of

multilateral organisations, which needed to be strengthened to address issues such as climate change, which was exacerbating many of the other difficulties faced by the world.

Following his introductory remarks, the UN Secretary-General responded to comments and questions from Council attendees. Delegates representing parties from across the world drew attention to wide-ranging issues such as refugee rights and migrations, gender equality, climate change and the resolution of outstanding conflicts. The Secretary-General addressed delegates' concerns from both a personal and institutional perspective, underlining his determination to promote peace and reconciliation efforts, gender parity and human rights mechanisms during his time in office.

SI President George Papandreou gave thanks to António Guterres, and expressed that his election had brought a new spirit to the UN, creating hope at a difficult time for the world. He noted that though the UN Secretary-General could not be partisan, social democrats had the opportunity and responsibility to be vocal on the issues he had raised, and called on them to achieve what they could through dialogue, friendship and compassion.

Before the opening of discussions on the main themes of the agenda, the Council was informed of developments in Spain, where the SI member PSOE had elected Pedro Sánchez as its leader with a large mandate. Sánchez was duly endorsed by acclamation to fill the position on the SI Presidium held by the party, and then spoke as a newly elected SI vice-president, delivering a keynote address underlining the shared history of the PSOE and the SI, and calling for an alternative vision of globalisation in face of climate change, inequality, and challenges to peace and democracy.

Exchanges on the first main theme, '*Strengthening multilateralism for peace*', touched on peace and conflict resolution processes in many parts of the world that are ongoing with varying levels of success. The Council heard that since the XXV SI Congress in Colombia, great forward steps had been taken in that country with the laying down by the FARC of all weapons, which had been received by the United Nations. Perspectives were heard on a great many unresolved conflicts in different regions of the world from those directly engaged in efforts for peace, including the situation in Iraq, the Kurdistan region, Syria, Moldova and Transnistria, the Great Lakes Region, Cyprus, India and Pakistan, Turkey, Western Sahara, Azerbaijan and Armenia, and Israel-Palestine. A common thread to these contributions was the need for the SI to be at the forefront of multilateral efforts to bring conflicting parties to the negotiating table and promote peace, except where an agreed bilateral process is in progress.

The second main theme of the meeting was '*Reaffirming our values and policies for the change we need*'. Speakers on the issue were in broad agreement that socialists and social democrats needed to be more assertive in promoting the values and policies that would bring positive change to the most vulnerable people across the world, and make clearer the distinction between the forward-looking proposals of social democratic parties and the conservative and reactionary alternatives.

On the subject of democracy, the focus was on the need to overcome challenges to democracy in many parts of the world, under the main theme '*Defending and protecting democracy where it is denied or is under threat*'. Speakers from a number of countries suffering a democratic deficit outlined their experiences and the challenges they face.

Being its first meeting in a new inter-Congress period, the Council also had the task of establishing the working organs of the SI. The membership of the statutory committees of the SI was duly elected, in line with the principle of regional balance and ensuring representation for SIW on both the Ethics Committee and the Finance and Administration Committee. Regional committees for Africa, Asia-Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, the CIS, the

Caucasus and the Black Sea, and the Mediterranean were re-established. The Council endorsed the re-establishment of the SI Middle East Committee at a time when new initiatives and new impetus to the peace process are sorely needed. The Council also established a Committee on Migrations and Refugees.

The Council further agreed that the work of the SI Commission on Inequality in the World Economy would continue for the next inter-Congress period. A number of interventions had been made during the course of the Council meeting, underlining that despite the successful reaching of an agreement in Paris, much work remains to be done on climate change. In order to ensure that the SI accompanies this process and to build on the achievements of the SI Commission for a Sustainable World Society in previous years, a commission on the issue of climate change and energy was established.

In line with the decision of the XXV Congress, the SI Council will continue to be engaged in the implementation of the principle of gender parity within the organisation, and will set up the Committee on Equality and define its membership and mandate at the next Council meeting.

The Council acted in order with a specific mandate from the XXV Congress to fill vacancies on the SI Presidium in line with statutory requirements for gender and regional balance. Elected to join the ranks of the SI vice-presidents were Janira Hopffer Almada (PAICV, Cabo Verde), Shazia Marri (PPP, Pakistan) and Bokary Treta (RPM, Mali).

At its conclusion, the Council adopted a number of resolutions and declarations relating to items discussed under the main themes on the agenda from a global perspective and on specific situations of concern to SI member parties.

The Council decided that its next meeting would be held in Spain at the invitation of the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party (PSOE) and its leader Pedro Sánchez, at the end of November 2017.

Declarations and resolutions, Meeting of the SI Council, New York

11-12 July 2017

Declaration on action to combat climate change

The Socialist International has a longstanding commitment to the global fight against climate change, an issue which has been at the heart of the agenda of the SI Council and Congress, and was the major focus of the work of the Commission a Sustainable World Society between 2007 and 2011. The SI and its member parties have at the same time been among those working tirelessly for the success of the negotiations under the auspices of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The finalisation and approval of the Paris Agreement in December 2015 was welcomed enthusiastically by the SI as a signal of consensus among all countries of the world about the serious and immediate threat posed by climate change, and a recognition that concerted action is required by all countries to address its causes.

In light of the recent notification by the present government of the United States of its intention to withdraw from the Paris Agreement, the SI Council unequivocally reiterates its commitment not only to the fulfilment of the commitments made at COP21, but also to go beyond that which was agreed in order to ensure that the global temperature rise can be limited to 1.5°C. The Council regrets that the current ruling administration in the US has seen fit to withdraw from

its obligations, commensurate with its status as the leading historical contributor to the changing climate.

The Council further expresses its full support to those who continue to work to fulfil the commitments of the US under the Paris agreement, at the level of individual states, cities and businesses that have made clear their disagreement with the path taken by the federal government on this most crucial of issues.

In line with its fundamental commitments on the issue, the Council establishes a commission on the issue of climate change and energy, to begin activities during the current inter-Congress period. This group will work to promote the enduring vision of the SI to tackle climate change while ensuring that the right to development is protected. On energy, the Council reiterates its commitment to a zero-carbon future and mandates the commission to examine how this can be best achieved in both developed and developing economies.

Resolution on Cameroon

The members of the Socialist International meeting in Council at the headquarters of the United Nations in New York City on 11-12 July 2017 follow with great concern the political, economic and social crisis that has virtually paralysed Cameroon's two English-speaking regions where lawyers have stopped going to court and schools have remained closed for almost a year.

The crisis is the result of decades of systematic neglect and marginalisation of the minority English-speaking population by President Biya's Government. SI cannot be indifferent to the situation in Cameroon which if left unresolved could threaten the peace and stability of the Central African sub-region.

Accordingly, the SI urges President Biya to follow the recommendations made by our member party, the Social Democratic Front, as well as the UN Special Envoy for Central Africa when he visited Cameroon early this year to release all detainees arrested in connection with this crisis and reopen dialogue with the leaders of the English-speaking population as a crucial first step to begin the process of healing an increasingly divided nation

Declaration on Cyprus

The XXV SI Congress and recent Council meetings have called on Greek and Turkish Cypriot leaders to pursue peace talks aiming to reach a bizonal, bicomunal federal solution for Cyprus as soon as possible, and has closely followed the recent reunification talks that concluded without an agreement on 7 July.

As agreed by both sides on the island, the current status quo cannot be accepted in Cyprus. Despite the unsuccessful end to the conference on Cyprus in Crans Montana last week, an important step forward was achieved as all stakeholders were present and presented their views. Consequently, all sides should not give up the efforts to change this status quo. Convergences reached to date should not be wasted. Both communities of Cyprus deserve to live in a peaceful country integrated in the international community. The United Nations and the international community should encourage all the related parties in this direction. Until the political solution is reached, confidence-building measures should be supported with the aim of mutual coexistence, rapprochement and peacebuilding throughout the island.

Declaration on Guatemala

Original: Spanish

The Council of the Socialist International expresses its support to the processes of strengthening of justice and the fight against corruption and impunity in Guatemala. In particular it values the efforts of United Nations through the International Commission Against Impunity in Guatemala (CICIG), which directly contributes to the consolidation of democracy in Guatemala.

Declaration on Mali

Original: French

The participants at the Council have reiterated their support and commitment to the sovereignty, the unity and the territorial integrity of Mali. They have welcomed the progress achieved in implementing the Peace and Reconciliation Agreement in Mali, a result of the Algiers process, under the authority of His Excellency Ibrahim Boubacar Keita, President of the Republic of Mali. They called on all the Malian signatory parties to continue their efforts in order to restore the authority of the State of Mali over the whole of its territory.

The participants have welcomed the adoption of resolution 2359 (2017) of 21 June 2017, regarding G5 Sahel Joint Force (FC-G5S) to fight against terrorism, organised transnational crime and human trafficking. They have appealed to the international community to offer an urgent and concrete support in this respect, and they have insisted on the need to convene without delay the Conference for the planning of contributions from bilateral and multilateral partners of the region, in accordance with the resolution 2359 (2017), in order to ensure the coordination of the efforts of assistance by the donors to the FC-G5S.

Resolution on Puerto Rico

Original: Spanish

The Council of the Socialist International welcomes the Decision of the Special Committee on Decolonisation on 19 June 2017 in which, once again, the Special Committee unanimously:

- has reaffirmed the inalienable right of the people of Puerto Rico to self-determination and independence;
- has recognised that the majority of the people of Puerto Rico is against the continuation of the current regime of political subordination to the United States;
- has condemned the decision of the government of the United States of imposing a Board of Fiscal Supervision appointed by the President of the United States with absolute authority over the elected officials of the government of Puerto Rico;
- has recognised that the Supreme Court of the United States formally ruled in 2016 that the final authority over Puerto Rico rests with the Congress of the United States and that any limited concession of a self-government can be revoked unilaterally by the said Congress;
- has taken note that the most recent consultation regarding political status on 11 July 2017 was not designed to promote decolonisation in accordance with the Resolution 1514(15) of the General Assembly and that furthermore the electoral turnout was only 23%.

- has demanded that the government of the United States assume its responsibilities to accelerate a process that may allow the people of Puerto Rico to fully exercise their right to self-determination and independence in accordance with international law.

The SI Council further calls on the United Nations Secretary General, António Guterres, to lend his good offices to ensure that the request that was reiterated in the Decision of the Special Committee on 19 June 2017 be pursued, in the sense that the General Assembly “broadly examine in all its aspects, the question of Puerto Rico and reach a decision as soon as possible”.

Resolution on Refugees

Original: Spanish

The Council of the Socialist International, meeting in the headquarters of the United Nations in New York on 11-12 July 2017, expresses its support and solidarity with refugees all over the world.

Considering the thousands of lives lost, especially children and women who through refuge are searching for an alternative to the conflicts and wars and in their travels, be it by land or sea;

Considering the situation that innumerable citizens are suffering in refugee camps all over the world, subject to misery and hunger;

Expresses, through its world Council, the conviction that all refugees are “citizens of the world” and as such they deserve priority, and

Reaffirms its commitment to care, protection and support, in this inhuman situation that confronts the world.

Declaration on Syria

The Syrian crisis has taken various dimensions that pose a threat to world peace, which therefore require an urgent and just solution and to continue the efforts of the international community to eradicate terrorism.

Efforts should continue so that all Syrian democratic forces should be integrated into the peace efforts in both Geneva and Astana.

The countries of the region, as well as the international actors, must cooperate towards the goal of a peaceful resolution at the conflict which will lay the foundations for an open, inclusive and peaceful Syria, one that guarantees the security of all and the respect of every citizen’s diverse identity. Only then can the return of refugees be realized and the reconstruction of Syria be accomplished.

Declaration on Turkey

The SI Council stands beside the many thousands who were walking alongside CHP leader Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu during his Justice March from Ankara to Istanbul, and the millions who turned out at the rally on his arrival in Maltepe. Their peaceful calls for rights, law and justice must be heard.

The Council wholeheartedly supports the demands of the people of Turkey for justice and democracy. Since the failed coup on 15 July 2016, which we condemned, freedoms and rights of

the Turkish citizens have been curtailed and many of them find themselves the innocent victims of an indiscriminate crackdown that has left thousands without jobs or arrested.

Crucial tenets of the democratic system have been targeted, such as freedom of expression, as reflected in the continued imprisonment of more than 150 journalists. The forced closure of many media outlets is equally an attack on a pillar of democracy, namely the freedom of the press. The imprisonment of opposition parliamentarians practised by the government of Turkey is completely alien to any democracy, as are the current judicial proceedings against a dozen members of parliament. We condemn all these attacks on the democratic system, in particular the sentencing of MP Enis Berberoğlu of the SI member CHP to 25 years in prison.

The Council of the Socialist International reiterates its support and solidarity to the democratic opposition in Turkey, in face of concerted actions to suppress fundamental rights and freedoms on the part of the Turkish government. We have full confidence that all those citizens of Turkey who are today standing up to safeguard democracy and their future will prevail.

The Council fully endorses the Maltepe Call for Justice issued on behalf of millions on 9 July and urges the immediate implementation of the ten demands contained therein.

Declaration on Venezuela

Original: Spanish

The Council of the Socialist International, meeting at the headquarters of the United Nations in New York, on 11-12 July 2017, has been the occasion to express once again the concern of the organisation at the worsening of the humanitarian crisis and the weakening of democracy in Venezuela.

The Socialist International, at its different meetings, has received information and denunciations duly supported from its member parties in Venezuela. The organisation has committed its solidarity and good offices to the search of fair, peaceful solutions in compliance with the Venezuelan constitutional order.

The International reiterates the need to promote in Venezuela political changes that guarantee the freedoms, the impartiality of Justice and the autonomy and separation of public powers, all necessary for the normal functioning of democracy. It insists on the need for the opening of a humanitarian channel, the release of all political prisoners, and the full recognition of the National Assembly and the timetable for elections. At the same time, it considers necessary that the government withdraw the proposal of a Constituent because that departs from the constitutional and democratic principles.

The Council of the Socialist International reaffirms its commitment to continue supporting all the democratic forces in Venezuela.

Venezuelan government deepens break with democracy and increases repression and violence

31 July 2017

The Socialist International has followed with grave concern the recent events in Venezuela, where yesterday the government of President Nicolás Maduro held a vote to elect members of a constituent assembly via a process that ran contrary to Venezuela's current Constitution. This election in turn did not meet the minimum requirements and guarantees to ensure that the

vote was fair and its results credible. It was also an election marked by repression and violence that cost the lives of more than 10 Venezuelans; these adding to the 120 fatalities that have already resulted from the repression that has taken place during demonstrations over the last few months.

Given the lack of legitimacy of the path taken by the Venezuelan government, the Socialist International, along with condemning this serious breakdown of democratic order, today reiterates its deep solidarity with every citizen who has been suffering from the consequences of the serious political, economic, social and humanitarian crisis to which the country has been subject for a long time; a crisis that is deepening and worsening the further Venezuela moves away from good governance, and respect and recognition of the institutions of democracy.

In the current circumstances, Venezuela is at a critical juncture in its history, and nobody can deny the enormous responsibility that falls upon President Maduro and members of the current Government. Today, we are at the limits of a point of no return, and the country must urgently regain its ability to recognise the diversity that accompanies political life in democracy, or it will continue to descend into the authoritarianism and repression that we have seen over recent days.

Venezuela, which has always been an ally in the struggles for democracy and freedom in the face of past dictatorships in Latin America, does not deserve this fate.

The government of Venezuela must respect the life, liberty and rights of all of its citizens and must release immediately all political prisoners. The government should listen to those who have an opinion to contribute to democratic coexistence, beginning with those who have been duly elected to do so, the members of the National Assembly, elected in December 2015 for a tenure lasting until 2021. The government must respect and recognise the mandate given by the people to the National Assembly and the powers of this institution in line with the country's constitutional system.

At this crucial time for Venezuela, the Socialist International stands side by side with its people and calls on the entire international community to act decisively to preserve Venezuelans' freedom and all of their rights in response to the difficult juncture with which they are faced at this time.

The Socialist International will remain in contact with its member parties in Venezuela, and with the Democratic Unity Roundtable (MUD), in order to continue supporting their efforts for democracy and peace.

It is time to enforce the Democratic Charter in Venezuela

18 August 2017

The Socialist International strongly condemns the decision of the Venezuelan regime to usurp the powers of the National Assembly, the seat of the legislative power in that country.

This unconstitutional and illegitimate decision does not only ignore the will of the Venezuelan people expressed in the ballot box in elections that took place at the end of 2015, in which its members were elected, but places, in an unequivocal and irrefutable way, the people of Venezuela under an authoritarian and dictatorial government.

Under these circumstances, the international community, faced with the risk of having to witness an untenable internal situation of continuing violations of the Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of the Venezuelan people, must act decisively and with a sense of

urgency, with reason prevailing over the rule of force, in order to prevent the Venezuelan authorities from committing the crime of depriving their people of their rights and freedoms and to mobilise themselves to implement the Right to Protection in the case of the Venezuelan people.

Within this context, we also call on the Organisation of American States, OAS, to take immediate action in favour of the enforcement of the Democratic Charter in Venezuela.

The defence of democracy in Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as in other regions and continents, must be a shared priority in politics and by all the actors involved.

SI in Angola to observe elections

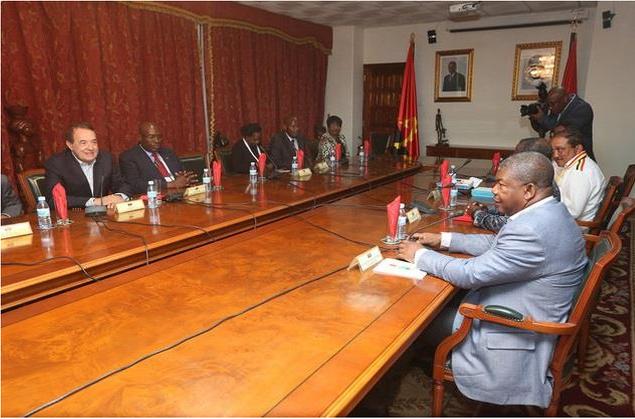
23 August 2017



MPLA candidate for President of the Republic, João Lourenço, receives international observers



President João Lourenço with SI Secretary General, Luis Ayala



SI Secretary General in Angola

SI call to protect the Rohingya people in Myanmar

8 September 2017

The Socialist International has witnessed with growing concern the severe deterioration of the situation in Myanmar's Rakhine state. Renewed violence has led to multiple deaths and the displacement of many thousands of members of the Rohingya minority in that country, deepening the humanitarian crisis. Ethnic Rohingya refugees who have successfully fled to Bangladesh have reported massacres in their villages and the burning of hundreds of homes by the Burmese military, in an effort to remove the civilian Rohingya population from this area by forcible means.

The government and authorities of Myanmar have a moral and legal responsibility to ensure the safety and security of all those living in the country, regardless of ethnicity and religion, and the SI calls on the government to now cooperate with the United Nations and to allow aid to reach those in desperate need. The reluctance of the Burmese authorities to allow independent monitors to access the affected areas of Rakhine state casts doubt on their denial of responsibility for the violence and destruction. The SI appeals in particular to State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi to show moral leadership and exert her influence and authority to put a stop to the suffering of the Rohingya.

As the crisis continues to deepen, the international community must also fulfil its responsibility to the Rohingya minority in Myanmar, by increasing pressure on the Burmese government to take the necessary steps to bring an end to the violence and grant the Rohingya people their fundamental rights. Those who have been forced to flee to neighbouring countries, including more than 120,000 who have crossed into Bangladesh in the last two weeks, must be assured of humanitarian assistance and given support until they are able to return to their homes.

The SI has consistently spoken out in support of the rights of the Rohingya people in Myanmar, a subject that has been addressed by both its Committee on Migrations and the XXV Congress of the SI, which took place in Cartagena earlier this year. It has heard first hand from representatives of the Rohingya on their current and historical plight. The SI now reiterates its call, made at the XXV Congress, for the leadership and government of Myanmar to immediately end persecution and human rights violations against the Rohingya and to open a full dialogue to address their minority rights and needs to be recognised and respected as full citizens.

Meeting of the SI Presidium and Heads of State & Government, United Nations, New York

21 September 2017



The Presidium of the Socialist International gathered at the headquarters of the United Nations in New York on 21 September 2017 for its annual meeting in conjunction with the high-level segment of the UN General Assembly. The main items on the agenda of this meeting were the pursuit and maintenance of international peace and security and the promotion of sustained economic growth and sustainable development, issues which are central to the work of the SI and its members. As in previous years, the members of the Presidium were joined by a number of heads of state and government from SI member parties, senior representatives of SI member parties in government and specially invited guests. The substance of the discussions and perspectives heard on the issues on the agenda were reflected in a statement issued following the meeting.

The meeting was opened with an expression of sympathy and solidarity to the victims of the major earthquake that had struck Mexico two days prior to the meeting, and those who had been and continue to be in the path of the powerful hurricanes that had caused such destruction across the Caribbean. Outlining the agenda of the meeting, SI President George Papandreou underlined the importance of the United Nations for social democrats who wanted and needed a world based on the values of cooperation. The SI Secretary General Luis Ayala introduced the discussions, adding that as the largest global political family, with close to 50 member parties in government, the SI had a unique ability to influence the global debate on these questions.

On the theme of international peace, the Presidium closely examined the threat posed to regional and global stability by North Korea. Joining the meeting for these discussions was Kevin Rudd, former prime minister of Australia and president of the Asia Society Policy Institute, who presented his expert opinions on potential future scenarios and the ways in which a diplomatic solution might be achieved. Rudd outlined the framework for a diplomatic

initiative to resolve tensions on the Korean peninsula and bring an end to the nuclear programme of North Korea. The first step would be that the Korean armistice agreement could be turned into a peace treaty and official US recognition of the North. This would be accompanied by external security guarantees for the North Korea state and regime, from China, the US and Russia, followed by a staged withdrawal of US military from South Korea based on the verifiable elimination of the nuclear arsenal.

Members of the Presidium had the opportunity to put forward their own impressions of the situation during in-depth exchanges, and solidarity was expressed with other peoples and countries of the region directly affected. Of concern was the controversial and challenging rhetoric emanating from North Korea and the US Administration, as well as the potential for South Korea and Japan to develop their own nuclear deterrent in response to the threat from the DPRK. The prevailing sentiment was of a need to be creative and optimistic, to be ambitious for peace and foster the role that the UN could play in facilitating a freeze in the conflict.

The ways in which insecurity and conflict affect a number of countries where SI member parties are in government were described by heads of state and government in attendance. President Alpha Condé of Guinea thanked the SI and its members for their support in the past when his country had been dealing with the Ebola crisis. He underlined the extent of the problem of terrorism in Africa and, as Chair of the African Union, he emphasised the need for African solutions to African problems. His sentiments on the need for inter-African cooperation were echoed by his counterpart from Burkina Faso, President Roch Marc Christian Kaboré, attending his first UN General Assembly meeting as the head of state of his country. President Kaboré explained that Burkina Faso was at the epicentre of terrorism in the Sahel region, and called for support of all countries and the UN for the newly-established G5 Sahel task force. He underlined that action to eliminate poverty and youth unemployment was indispensable in the struggle against terror.

Prime Minister Pavel Filip explained that Moldova was a young country with a history of conflict. He wanted to see the withdrawal of foreign troops from the Transnistria region, as peace and security were preconditions for development and economic success. Another perspective came from Turkish Cypriot leader Mustafa Akinci, who explained how an opportunity for a meaningful solution under the auspices of the UN to half a century of conflict had ended without any positive outcome. He expressed his determination to persist in the quest for a solution as long as the problem continued to exist.

Contributions made on the themes of the meeting from presidium members encompassed the situations in their respective countries and the wider global threats and opportunities. A view shared by many was that the world needed a strong United Nations to work for common rules and principles, with solidarity and human rights. Multilateral initiatives were more important than ever to resolve conflicts, to address poverty and inequality, to promote sustainable development and to secure the future of the planet through concerted action on climate change.

The members of the SI presidium that participated in the meeting were George Papandreou, SI President; Luis Ayala, SI Secretary General; SI Vice-Presidents Victor Benoit (Haiti), Elsa Espinoza (Mexico), Eero Heinäluoma (Finland), Janira Hopffer Almada (Cape Verde), Chantal Kambiwa (Cameroon), Shazia Marri (Pakistan), Attila Mesterhazy (Hungary), Rafael Michelini (Uruguay), Mario Nalpatian (Armenia), Umut Oran (Turkey), Julião Mateus Paulo (Angola), Alexander Romanovich (Russia), Nabil Shaath (Palestine), Ousmane Tanor Dieng (Senegal), Bokary Treta (Mali); SI Honorary Presidents Mustafa Ben Jaafar (Tunisia) and Tarja Halonen, former President of Finland. They were joined by the President of Guinea Alpha Condé, current

Chairperson of the African Union, the President of Burkina Faso Roch Marc Christian Kaboré, the Prime Minister of Moldova Pavel Filip, Kevin Rudd, former Prime Minister of Australia and President of the Asia Society Policy Institute, Miguel Vargas, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Dominican Republic and President of the PRD, Bert Koenders, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, Mustafa Akinci, Turkish Cypriot leader, and officials of the governments of Mozambique and South Africa.

Statement

In recent weeks and months, a series of natural disasters have caused death and destruction in different regions of the world. The SI stands in solidarity with all those who have suffered loss of loved ones, property and livelihood, including the victims of the Mexican earthquake, successive major hurricanes in the Caribbean, mudslides in Sierra Leone and flooding in Nepal, India and Bangladesh. Many of those countries affected are facing severe economic challenges and will therefore require international support and solidarity as they seek to rebuild following these tragic developments. The number of extreme weather events during 2017 also underlines the necessity of concerted action to address the climatic changes that are increasing the likelihood of such incidents occurring with more frequency.

The maintenance of international peace and security

The current threats to global peace and security are of great concern to the nations of the world, and the United Nations, as the preeminent forum for the multilateral pursuit of international peace and security, has today a crucial task ahead of it.

The grave situation on the Korean peninsula is a challenge to the entire international community. The atomic weapons that have been developed by the North Korean regime represent a major threat to stability and peace in Asia and the Pacific, with global repercussions. Recent aggressive and provocative actions by North Korea are further destabilising the region, showing a failure by the regime to comply with its international obligations. The potential for conflict between states with the capability to launch nuclear weapons is a chilling prospect. No effort must be spared in seeking a diplomatic solution to this crisis, in order to avert a potential catastrophe.

All efforts to bring peace to Syria must be supported, in line with consistent calls made by the SI for dialogue and negotiation. This includes the most recent talks held in Astana aimed at establishing de-escalation zones in Syria. We welcome the decline in strength and influence of Daesh, and the priority in the short term must be ending the violence and bloodshed.

Across the Middle East, populations that are subject to terror require the support and solidarity of the global community. In Iraq, the defeat and withdrawal of Daesh must be accompanied by assistance in rebuilding for those who are left behind in the aftermath. In Yemen, the desperate humanitarian situation must be addressed. Indiscriminate air strikes have claimed the lives of thousands of civilians, and the armed conflict has left nearly 20 million Yemenis in need of humanitarian assistance. This conflict deserves the full and urgent attention of the international community. Credible reports of violations of international law and human rights must be independently investigated.

The move towards reconciliation in Palestine is a welcome development and the SI supports Palestinian efforts to renew the democratic process and convene national elections as soon as possible. This should serve as a catalyst for concerted efforts to achieve the two-state solution, which requires the recognition of the State of Palestine on the June 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital. As previously outlined by the SI Council, the collective efforts of the

international community are required to bring an end to the occupation of Palestinian land and allow the Palestinian people their right to self-determination.

In the Sahel region, President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita (Mali), President Mahamadou Issoufou (Niger) and President Roch Marc Christian Kaboré (Burkina Faso) are playing a crucial role in the fight to end terror and bring security and stability. The establishment of a joint task force to tackle terrorism in the Sahel with the key regional actors is a positive development and the SI urges international partners to offer their full support to this endeavour. It is equally crucial that military action against terrorist groups in the Sahel is accompanied with concerted action to reduce poverty and unemployment, which have been shown to be the best recruiting tool for terrorist and extremist groups.

The Presidium reiterated the call made by the SI to end the violence in Rakhine province, Myanmar, where a humanitarian crisis is underway following a severe escalation of the discrimination suffered by the Rohingya people. It condemned the systematic persecution of this minority in Myanmar and underlined the need for the government of that country to allow independent monitors to the affected areas to verify reports of pillage, executions and forced displacements at the hands of the military. Though the attacks made by the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army should be condemned, the disproportionate and indiscriminate military response against a marginalised community is completely unjustified and in contravention of basic human rights. The UN and the international community should exert pressure on the government of Myanmar to uphold the rule of law, and the SI Presidium echoed the recent call by the UN Secretary-General for the suspension of military action, the right of return for those forced to leave the country, and allowing the delivery of humanitarian aid by the UN and other international organisations.

Conflict, insecurity and persecution are major causes of the unprecedented migratory flows in the world today. The resolution of the global refugee crisis requires a great deal of compassion and solidarity, in particular from those countries in the developed world that have the capacity to welcome those in desperate need of assistance.

The successful conclusion of peace talks on the future of Cyprus are necessary to end the unacceptable status quo and to bring the benefits of mutual coexistence on the island. The SI continues to support talks aiming to reach a bizonal, bicomunal federation for Cyprus.

The crisis in Venezuela continues to be extremely troubling, as the regime fails in its democratic duty to its citizens, resulting in further economic hardship and suffering for the people of that country. The deprivation of the democratic rights of Venezuelans must come to an end, all political prisoners must be released and the powers of the Parliament must be recognised and restored. In Guatemala, the rule of law must be upheld and the justice sector strengthened. Accordingly, the important work of the International Commission Against Impunity in Guatemala (CICIG) should continue free from hindrance or interference.

The promotion of sustained economic growth and sustainable development

The SI remains fully committed to economic growth that is sustainable in the long-term, acknowledging the need to take a unified approach to the problems of poverty, inequality and climate change.

Concerted efforts are still needed to achieve the objective of zero hunger in the world, and the recent rise in global hunger is a disturbing development. Last year, the number of undernourished people increased significantly to 815 million, reaching the highest level in nearly a decade. This trend must be reversed. Deterioration in the food security situation in many of the poorer regions of the world is directly linked to conflict and climate-related

shocks, underlining the importance of taking action to resolve conflicts and minimise climate change.

Persistent economic inequality within and between countries and regions is a severe problem and a catalyst for grievances and conflict in all regions of the world. The continued existence of poverty is unacceptable while the richest 1% continue to accumulate more wealth.

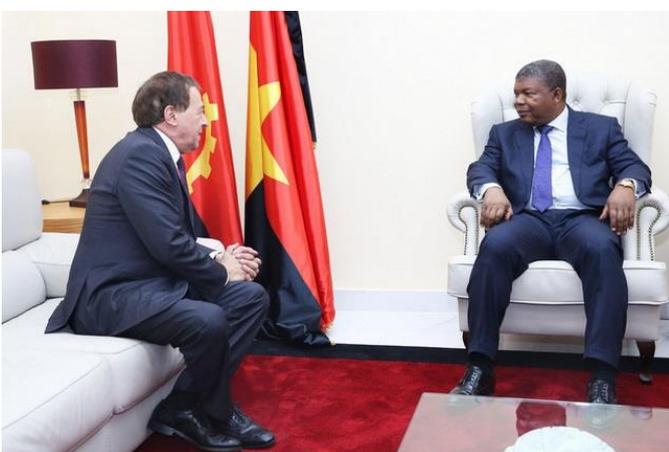
Climate change remains the single greatest threat to economic prosperity, food security and future quality of life on this planet. The renewed commitment of the vast majority of governments to the Paris Agreement on climate change is in this regard to be welcomed. This sends a strong signal that there is an overwhelming resolve within the international community to do what is necessary to mitigate anthropomorphic climate change, which will not be derailed by reticence and equivocation from individual member states.

The inseparability of these problems underlines the importance of the Global Goals for Sustainable Development, which are a central feature of the political programmes of SI member parties. The lack of progress and in some areas regression that has taken place since the adoption of the goals in 2015 is a cause for concern. If the Global Goals are to be achieved by 2030, there needs to be concerted action in all areas, with accountability and monitoring of progress to identify the goals that are in danger of being missed.

The role of the United Nations

In the face of the many serious and multi-faceted threats to security, prosperity and sustainability, the SI Presidium reinforced the central role that the UN must play, both in resolving conflicts between member states and in responding to global problems that no country can tackle alone. There is no other multilateral intergovernmental organisation that can substitute for the UN, and it is up to all member states to work within its framework to face up to the common challenges confronting humanity. For the UN to succeed, it needs more engagement from its member states, not less. A strong UN and a robust system of global governance should not be seen as a threat to national sovereignty, but a mutual benefit to all countries of the world.

UN Secretary-General António Guterres has the full support of our movement and all its members as he works to uphold the values of the UN charter and promote multilateralism, conflict resolution, peace and sustainable development. These are the goals of social democracy and will remain at the heart of the agenda of the SI and its member parties.



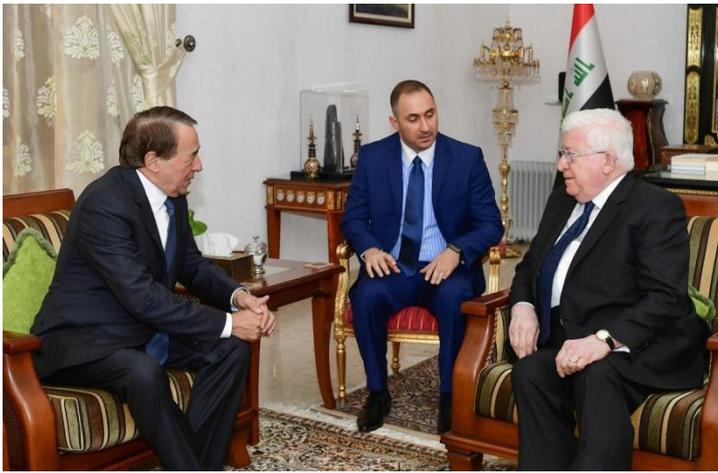
PRESIDENT JOÃO LOURENÇO, (ON THE RIGHT) MEETS CHILEAN LUIS AYOLA, SG OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALIST

PHOTO: ANTONIO ESCRIVAO

Inauguration of João Manuel Gonçalves Lourenço as new President of Angola

26 September 2017

Luis Ayala spoke in a meeting with the press at the end of an audience granted by the MPLA vice president, João Lourenço. The Chilean, Luis Ayala, said that the Socialist International, an organization of which the MPLA is a full member, is satisfied with the party's victory.



Socialist International SG in Baghdad following the passing of President Talabani

8 October 2017

H.E. Dr Fuad Masum the President of the Republic received Mr Luis Ayala the Secretary General of the Socialist International, in Baghdad



Mr. Ayala came to offer his condolences on the occasion of the death of former Iraqi President, founder and Secretary General of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, PUK, and former Vice President and Honorary President of the Socialist International, Mam Jalal Talabani



SI at the 137th IPU Assembly in St Petersburg, Russia

14 October 2017



The 137th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) was held in St. Petersburg, Russia, from 14 to 18 October 2017. The inaugural session included an address by the President of the Russian Federation, Vladimir Putin, along with outgoing IPU President, Saber Chaudhury and the heads of both the Council of the Federation and the State Duma of Russia.

This Assembly, the largest gathering of the IPU to date, voted to give prominence, as an emergency item, to the humanitarian tragedy affecting the Rohingya people being forced to flee Myanmar, victims of ethnic cleansing. Other themes highlighted during the discussions were democracy and human rights, the threat of nuclear weapons, and the role of parliaments in promoting peace. The Assembly elected a new IPU President for the next three years, Gabriela Cuevas from Mexico.

Within the framework of the Assembly, the SI held its usual meeting of parliamentarians from the social democratic political family to exchange views on key issues for debate and decisions due to be taken by the Assembly of the IPU and to discuss issues of common concern on the international agenda.

The SI meeting included among its participants a good number of Speakers and Deputy Speakers of Parliament. Those present included representatives from Angola, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Finland, Ghana, Guinea, Italy, Mali, Nicaragua, Namibia, Niger, Palestine, Portugal, Russia, South Africa, Turkey, Uruguay, Venezuela, Zambia, and from the Global Fund. The meeting was chaired by the SI Secretary General.

Participants received a first-hand report from the head of the Fatah delegation to the talks that had just concluded in Egypt between Fatah and Hamas for reconciliation and national unity in Palestine. These positive developments were welcomed, and seen as a major contribution and a catalyst to move forward the stalled process for the two-state solution and peace in the region. Participants shared information on developments in different regions and countries, among them the situation in the Sahel and efforts to end terror and secure peace, with

contributions from countries in that region and others. Democracy was also a strong theme in the exchanges, with a particular focus on the situation in Venezuela.

Elections to a number of posts within the IPU, including that of President, was a subject of discussion and the meeting had the opportunity to hear from participants who were standing for election to different responsibilities.

The Secretary General reported on various activities of the Socialist International and the work ahead following the decisions of the last Council and Congress, and on its global work in favour of democracy, the resolution of conflicts, and for greater equality in the world economy.

The Socialist International on the centenary of the Balfour Declaration

2 November 2017

One hundred years ago today during the First World War, British Foreign Secretary Arthur Balfour conveyed the support of his country's government for the establishment of a "national home for the Jewish people in Palestine", in a declaration that has had a profound impact on the subsequent history of the Middle East and on the peoples of Israel and Palestine. Balfour's pledge paved the way for the declaration of an independent State of Israel in 1948 and later its acceptance as a member of the United Nations in 1949.

On this anniversary, despite the conflicts, wars and human suffering of the past hundred years, we can appreciate that the aspirations and needs of one people led the international community to act positively to their quest for statehood. There remains, however, the challenge to equally respond to the aspirations and needs of the Palestinian people who have waited all these years for their rights to be recognised and respected.

The commitment made one hundred years ago in the Balfour Declaration that "nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine", has not been fully upheld, and many of these rights have been successively eroded. In addition, the declaration notably fails to mention political rights and was made without any consultation of these nameless communities. The unequal status afforded to the non-Jewish population by the Balfour Declaration has contributed to the ensuing decades of unresolved conflict between Arabs and Jews throughout the Middle East.

The Socialist International has long considered that a just and durable resolution to the Arab-Israeli conflict is a prerequisite for regional peace in the Middle East, and this requires that all the rights – civil, religious *and* political – of the Palestinian people be upheld. This is only achievable with the full international recognition of an independent Palestinian state, living peacefully side by side with Israel, on the June 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital. This has been reflected on numerous occasions in positions adopted by the Socialist International, with the support of its Israeli and Palestinian member parties, underlining the right to statehood of the Palestinian people. The Socialist International has equally agreed that any member party of the organisation that is a member of its national government should ensure its recognition of the State of Palestine.

To date, although 136 of the 193 UN member states have now recognised the State of Palestine, it holds the status in the UN of "observer non-member state". It is high time for the entire international community and the United Nations to take decisive and courageous actions, giving not only their long overdue full and unconditional recognition to the State of Palestine, but also the support necessary to ensure the viability of that state becomes a tangible reality. Only on this basis can peace and security in a two-state solution between two sovereign and democratic states with equal status be achieved.

Meeting of the SI Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean, Santo Domingo

3-4 November 2017



The Socialist International Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean convened in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, on 3-4 November, hosted by the SI member party in that country, the PRD. On the occasion, twenty parties of the social democratic family from that region shared their views on the priorities of the continental agenda, the challenges their democracies face and their national situations. Being its first meeting after the SI Congress in Cartagena, the Committee also had to elect its authorities for the current period.

Opening the meeting, the leader of the host party and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Dominican Republic, Miguel Vargas, thanked all those present and shared with them what, in his opinion, were the main challenges for the progressive political forces in Latin America and the Caribbean.

The SI Secretary General, responding to the words of Vargas, thanked the PRD and its president for their warm welcome, highlighting the long-lasting and strong relationship that exists with Dominican Republic since the days when José Francisco Peña Gómez established this relation between his party and the SI. At the same time, he thanked Miguel Vargas for the life and dynamism that he has given to the Committee during his term as Chair these last years. Luis Ayala expressed his satisfaction at the results obtained in the last meetings of the International: during the first half of this year, on the occasion of the Congress in Colombia, there was the opportunity to express our solidarity with the peace process underway in that country, in the presence of its President and Nobel Peace Prize winner and the colleagues of the Liberal Party; in the middle of the year, the organisation celebrated its Council at the headquarters of the United Nations in New York with the participation of the UN Secretary-General António Guterres; and now towards the end of the year, the Council in Barcelona will offer the organisation the opportunity to close a year of activities relevant to the International

together with the colleagues of the PSOE and its leader and SI Vice-President, Pedro Sánchez. It has been a time of challenges and accomplishments in different parts of the world. A quick look, said the Secretary General, shows that the International is very active and very present worldwide. The organisation keeps its commitments alive, such as the struggle for peace, which was in evidence with the declaration issued the previous day on the occasion of the centenary of the Balfour Declaration, to which are added new challenges of great importance.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, Luis Ayala pointed out that for more than three decades, the SI and its member parties have been the architects of the recovery of democracy. Today the dictatorships of times past no longer exist thanks to the efforts of so many in our own parties, but we must act in the face of the critical situation in Venezuela, a country where today there are political prisoners and where the rules and institutions of democracy are not respected; we must face the attempts of President Morales to stay indefinitely in power in Bolivia; the restrictions imposed by President Cartes on the political life of leaders such as the leader of our member party in Paraguay, Rafael Filizzola; or the threats of the judicialisation of politics in Guatemala, which are challenges for the democracies in the region where the SI is closely engaged. The extreme inequality, the challenges for Latin America and the Caribbean in the world economy, migration, the role of the State in promoting a fair and equitable growth, are important challenges in which the SI is and will continue to be present. Referring to the struggle for respect for the environment, the Secretary General recalled with indignation the assassination of the Honduran activist Berta Cáceres, a fact about which, only a few days ago in the report of an international group, it came to light that it was instigated by an electricity company and perpetrated with the participation of agents of the State. For this very reason, the Secretary General said in his conclusion, the work of the SI in this region is crucial and its agenda is ambitious.

The Committee then proceeded to unanimously re-elect Miguel Vargas as its Chair and decided to postpone to the second day of the meeting the election of its vice-chairs, nominating a special Commission composed of the Vice-Presidents Sandra Torres (UNE, Guatemala), Rafael Michelini (NE, Uruguay) and Bernal Jiménez (PLN, Costa Rica), with the mandate to propose to the Committee the criteria for the election that the proposed candidates should comply with.

During the first day of the proceedings, interventions were heard from Bernal Jiménez (PLN, Costa Rica), SI Vice-President, who put the emphasis on the role of education as the engine of economic development and on increased equality and good financing of public activity via fiscal and taxation policy. The challenge for achieving these priorities is eminently political more than technical, he said. Claudio Vásquez (PPD, Chile), highlighted that social democratic policies in the region should ensure the basic rights of all citizens, distinguishing different levels of action among which, in his opinion, the municipal sphere has a great importance, as well as the decisive fight against corruption. Julian Robinson (PNP, Jamaica), underlined the need to ensure the political social democratic identity, which is not always evident when measures are implemented that are also advocated by the political forces of centre and even those of the right, putting a special emphasis on the importance of political education. Francisco Rosales (FSLN, Nicaragua) emphasised that the achievement of a fair distribution is still a challenge for the social democratic forces, which must promote participative and inclusive democracies and when policies of alliances become necessary in the region, these should not take into consideration the forces of the right as has been the case in Europe.

Edgard Giménez (PDP, Paraguay), also advocated for the reaffirmation of the political identity of the parties that are members of the SI in order to achieve the longed-for objectives such as the SDGs with a view to 2030. Marcelo Stubrín (UCR, Argentina), pointed out that the region lives the paradox of an increasing inequality even though poverty has decreased, he also

mentioned his concern at the low quality of the institutions and their weakness to confront corruption and organised crime. He underlined the importance of collaboration among the nations of Latin America and the Caribbean to look for global responses to local problems. Rafael Michelini (NE, Uruguay), Vice-President of the SI, underlined the importance of the fight against corruption, mentioning the situation of the recent resignation of the vice-president of his country for having used an institutional credit card for minor personal expenses. José Murat (PRI, México) stressed that in order to fight against corruption and impunity, it is necessary to have a solid ideology and coherence with the principles that inspire us, the socialist thought at its origin, in his opinion, can be summarised as the search to have access to cultural goods and happiness for all, and with this idea in mind our movement must confront the different local, national, regional and global challenges.

Rubén Berríos (PIP, Puerto Rico), SI Honorary President, shared with those present the devastation caused in his country by the Hurricane Maria, pointing out that after many weeks a great part of the island is still without electricity or drinking water, in his opinion this natural catastrophe could have as a consequence the population questioning the efficiency of the colonial administration of the United States and the mood for independence recovering its momentum. Sandra Torres (UNE, Guatemala), welcomed the presence of women at the meeting and called them to actively participate in the debates; referring to the political situation in her country, she expressed her concern at the growing importance that has acquired these last years the so-called “civil society” in Guatemala and shared with the Committee her apprehension with regard to their interests, their agenda and the attempt to substitute political parties in public activities; the political parties have to be permanently strengthened; she underlined the risks involved in the judicialisation of the political activity and the election of candidates who are presented as not being in this situation but who are in no condition to carry out the basic tasks of government, as is the case of President Jimmy Morales in her country; she finished her intervention saying that her party, already in existence for 15 years, is today the main force nationally, a fact that allows her to look with optimism towards the future electoral challenges.

Francisco Aramayo (UN, Bolivia), told the Committee about the apprehensions of the opposition political forces in his country at the actions of President Evo Morales and his party MAS, who are searching, via the Constitutional Court, for ways to ignore the impediment for the President to present himself for re-election to a new consecutive period, disregarding not only the expressed text of the Constitution but also the result of the referendum of February 2016. Manoel Dias (PDT, Brasil), shared with the Committee the concerns of his party at the recent measures adopted by the government of President Temer, which go contrary to the realisations and achievements of the previous administrations of Presidents Lula and Rousseff; his party, he said, has come out well from the general wave of accusations of corruption in Brazilian politics, and his leader, Ciro Gómez, is highly valued by the population and is an option for the presidential elections next year. Víctor Benoit (FSD, Haiti), adding to the comments already heard in relation to Guatemala, affirmed that the situation is very similar to the one in his country where they live under the presidency of an outsider who clearly lacks the skills and the competence to lead the nation and is adopting bad measures and deficient public policies.

Pedro Neira (PRSD, Chile), explained that the coming elections in Chile, Honduras, Costa Rica and Colombia, to name but a few of the countries of the region that will hold elections during the next months, give a special feeling to meetings of this political family in which experiences are exchanged; he also addressed the issue of parliamentary diplomacy, mentioning that the deputy of his party Fernando Meza, has assumed for one year the presidency of the Andean

Parliament and could be interested in working with legislators of the Central American Parliament. Ricardo Sancho (PLN, Costa Rica), expressed that his party is well positioned with a view to the elections on 4 February next year; he also noted the interest in sharing in these meetings common experiences and good practices implemented by the different parties, in the Costa Rican case, he adds, there is a rich heritage in matters relating to environmental measures and climate change.

On the second day of the meeting the report of the Commission established to propose vice-chairs for the Committee was presented. Rafael Michelini, on behalf of the Commission, presented a proposal containing as the guiding criteria for the election, in accordance with the statutes and the practice of the SI, the following: prioritization (a maximum of a total of three vice-chairs for the Committee); gender parity; regional parity and representativeness (priority to be given to candidatures of countries and parties who do not have other authorities in the SI). The proposal of the Commission gave rise to a rich and interesting debate in which almost all the delegates took part. Finally, the proposal was approved. The Commission expressed that, taking into consideration the candidatures presented in a timely manner and the criteria just approved, the Commission proposed the following persons as vice-chairs: Rafael Filizzola (PDP, Paraguay), Francisco Rosales (FSLN, Nicaragua); and Eyra Ruiz (PRD, Panamá). The Committee ratified the proposal of the Commission.

The morning concluded with presentations of reports on national situations from Peru, Panama, Guatemala and Costa Rica.

Before the conclusion of the meeting, the Committee discussed and adopted declarations on Bolivia, Nicaragua, Puerto Rico and Venezuela.

Declaration on Bolivia

Original: Spanish

The Socialist International Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean, meeting in Santo Domingo on 3-4 November 2017, addressed the serious situation affecting democracy in Bolivia due to the actions carried out by the party in government, Movimiento al Socialismo (MAS), that threatens to cause a breakdown of the constitutional order with unpredictable consequences.

The party in government (MAS) has submitted to the Plurinational Constitutional Court an action of abstract appeal of unconstitutionality, with a view to having the Court declare the non-applicability of four articles of the Bolivian Constitution, in order to legalise the indefinite re-nomination of President Evo Morales to the presidency.

On 21 February 2016, the Bolivian people rejected by referendum the attempt by the Legislative Assembly to modify Article 168 of the Political Constitution of the State that establishes that the president can only be re-elected for one consecutive mandate, a result which expresses the sovereign decision of the Bolivian people to reject a fourth re-run by the president.

As stated by the Secretary General of the Organization of American States (OAS) referring to the situation in Bolivia, no judge can ignore the opinion of the only sovereign: the people.

The SI Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean expresses its concern at the above-mentioned actions promoted by the party in government and calls on President Morales to respect the result of the referendum of February 2016.

Resolution on Nicaragua

Original: Spanish

Considering that the people of the United States of North America and the people of Nicaragua have always maintained links of friendship and a close relationship over and above any political disagreement:

The Socialist International Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean rejects and condemns any interference in the internal affairs of the Republic of Nicaragua, as it constitutes a flagrant violation of the Principle of Non-Intervention and Self-Determination of the People. Therefore, it calls on the members of Congress, and the North American Senate in particular, to interrupt the process of Nica Act law, because it would violate the independence and sovereignty of Nicaragua.

Ultra-conservative sectors aim to promote the Nica Act law in the North American Congress, whose objective is to make representatives of the Government of the USA in multilateral financial organisations vote against applications for credit from Nicaragua. This would convert cooperation and these international organisations into an instrument of their interventionist policy which violates the rights of the Nicaraguan people to their development, because it is a real denial of the political, social, cultural and economic processes that are currently underway in Nicaragua to improve the lives of all the citizens and to promote peace, happiness, harmony and the wellbeing of all Nicaraguans; therefore, under the pretext of freedom, respect for human rights and the rule of law, what the Nica Act intends is their denial.

The Committee also calls on the member parties of the Socialist International with a dedication to peace and democracy, to stand in solidarity with the people of Nicaragua and their government in their fight against extreme poverty, poverty and unemployment.

Declaration on Puerto Rico

Original: Spanish

The SI Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean expresses its solidarity with the people of Puerto Rico over the devastation caused by the Hurricane Maria.

Added to the physical, economic and social devastation in Puerto Rico, already suffering more than ten consecutive years of economic and demographic contraction, is added the intensification of the colonial domination by the US Congress via the so-called Financial Oversight and Management Board imposed by the United States Congress.

The crisis unleashed by the hurricane has served to underline and expose the enormous economic, social and institutional decomposition into which colonialism has plunged Puerto Rico.

The Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean, in harmony with the many expressions of the Socialist International for more than thirty years, as in the resolutions of the United Nations Special Committee on Decolonization, reiterates its call to the United States government to promote a consensual mechanism that allows the people of Puerto Rico to fully exercise their inalienable right to self-determination and independence, and to set in motion a process that makes possible the urgent political and economic decolonization of Puerto Rico.

The people of Puerto Rico have already expressed themselves strongly in favor of ending the existing relationship of political subordination; it is now up to the United States to discharge its decolonization responsibilities without delay in accordance with international law.

Resolution on the political situation in Venezuela

Original: Spanish

The Socialist International Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean, meeting in Santo Domingo on 3-4 November 2017, makes the following appeal to the government of Venezuela in order to find a solution to the political crisis:

1. To immediately release the political prisoners and ensure the respect to the human rights of all Venezuelan to create the conditions for finding ways that lead to a satisfactory solution of the political crisis;

To respect the National Assembly and all its members in the performance of their duties. To respect the separation of powers established in the Constitution, the Rule of Law and the democratic principles;

To ensure that the presidential elections due in 2018 are free and fair, under the direction of an electoral authority that guarantees its full credibility, together with effective international observers. The legitimacy and independence of the electoral authority are essential elements to express and respect the sovereign will of the Venezuelan people;

The Committee offers its full support to President Danilo Medina and to the Minister of Foreign Affairs Miguel Vargas in their efforts in favour of peace in Venezuela by means of a process of dialogue between the government and the opposition in that country which will allow a democratic, peaceful and definitive outcome.



Meeting of the SI Council in Barcelona, Spain

24-25 November 2017



The Council of the Socialist International met on 24-25 November in Barcelona, hosted by its member party in Spain, the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party, PSOE. Delegations from all continents, representing SI member parties and invited guests, gathered to discuss three main themes: *Building the future with the left: democracy, equality and solidarity*; *Working for stability and peace in a world of multiple conflicts*; and *Promoting human responses to humanitarian crises*.

At the opening of the meeting, SI Secretary General Luis Ayala outlined the importance of the themes to be discussed and their significance for the socialist movement. He was pleased that the SI had delivered on its commitment to meet in Barcelona, saying that the SI was here to listen, understand and support the efforts of the socialists in Catalonia and Spain, at the side of Pedro Sanchez, leader of the PSOE, and Miquel Iceta, First Secretary of the Socialist Party of Catalunya. He noted with satisfaction that 2017 had been a year in which the SI had reaffirmed its commitments in face of global challenges, following on from the XXV Congress in Cartagena in March. Its member parties were motivated by a shared conviction that our principles, values, and politics, the way we understand them, are crucial in our common struggle for greater equality, justice and solidarity.

Miquel Iceta expressed his pleasure and honour to welcome all the delegates to Barcelona, in an address that reviewed the historical work of the SI and PSOE in promoting shared values and principles. He recounted the exemplary manner in which Catalan society had reacted to the recent terrorist attack, declaring that the people were not afraid because they were together. He expressed his firm belief that there should be no new borders around Catalonia, and that the PSC should continue to work for Barcelona to be the capital of the Mediterranean and one of Europe's great cities. His party offered Catalonians a country less divided, in which a willingness to give would allow all citizens to win, echoing the words of former SI president

Willy Brandt, who considered reconciliation to be the best weapon against isolation and prejudice.

SI President George Papandreou congratulated the PSOE and the PSC for standing up for shared socialist values at a historically crucial moment. He was convinced that both the PSOE and the PSC were on the right path and that they would be successful in providing lasting solutions to the crisis in Catalonia. This was one of many challenges in a turbulent world, and he stressed that it was not possible to improve societies without the inclusion and participation of citizens, giving them the voice to air their grievances and hopes. He reflected on the growing inequality in the world and lack of democratic accountability of corporations that had become bigger than governments. Increased fear and marginalisation in the world must be overcome with coexistence he added, and real change needed a democratic vision.

Pedro Sánchez, leader of the PSOE and an SI Vice-President, made a keynote speech at the closing of the meeting. He described Barcelona in the terms of Miguel de Cervantes as a city unique in beauty, which was a host to foreigners, hospital for the poor and homeland to the brave, words that continued to define the city. The PSOE was committed to radical equality between men and women, the recognition of multiple identities and global responses to global challenges. It would not let anyone appropriate Catalonia or Spain, but he saw the need to reach a new agreement and open the door to a new constitution. This vision was reflected in the Declaration on Catalonia adopted by the Council. Addressing current global challenges, he called for more democracy to tackle globalisation, for a social market economy that would prioritise combating climate change, for ending social disequilibrium and fighting corruption, leaving the best possible legacy for the next generation.

Being the 25th of November the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, Sánchez underlined the significance of that date for global social democrats. Earlier in the Council, all delegates had marked this event and sent a strong message of denunciation of these crimes on behalf of socialists the world over.

The diverse interventions on the main themes of the agenda incorporated many perspectives, ranging from the presentation of specific local and national situations to reflections on the global challenges faced by the people of the world. Specially invited guests included Antonio Ledezma (ABP, Venezuela), a former political prisoner who just days prior to the meeting had escaped house arrest in Venezuela where he had been held for more than a thousand days, who called for the liberation of Venezuela and an end to the suffering of its people. Maung Tun Khin, representing the Burmese Rohingya Organisation, presented a harrowing and deeply moving account of the extreme violence and persecution suffered by the Rohingya minority in Myanmar in recent months. The Council would later adopt a resolution on the situation in Venezuela and a declaration on the Rohingya.

Following the debates, the Council also adopted resolutions and declarations on Catalonia, the elections in Equatorial Guinea, on Honduras, Nicaragua and Haiti, on North Korea, on the Kurdish People, on the recent elections in Nicaragua, on slavery and migration, and on Yemen. The Council expressed its sympathy and sent a message of solidarity to all those affected by the terrorist attack on a mosque in the North Sinai region of Egypt during Friday prayers on 25 November, resulting in the loss of more than 300 lives.

In accordance with the mandate given by the XXV Congress and subsequent Council meeting in New York earlier in 2017, the SI agreed and established the Committee on gender equality. Its responsibilities will include identifying the obstacles and promoting strategies and innovative ideas for achieving gender parity.

The Council received reports from both the Ethics and the Finance committees which had met on the eve of the Council. The Ethics Committee had elected Ariane Fontenelle (PS, Belgium) as

its chair for the current inter-Congress period and the Finance Committee had re-elected Maurice Poler (AD, Venezuela) and Janos Veres (MSzP Hungary) as co-chairs and Márcio Bins (PDT, Brazil) as its vice-chair. The Council adopted the reports of both committees, and approved the budget of the SI for 2018.



**Declarations and resolutions, Meeting of the SI Council in Barcelona
24-25 November 2017**

Declaration on Catalonia

Original: Spanish

The Socialist International Council has always supported the struggle of the Spanish socialists for freedom, democracy and the rule of law. The transition to democracy, since the end of the Franco dictatorship, was an exemplary process, which has inspired many member parties of our organisation in their own struggles to gain freedoms. The Spanish Constitution of 1978 created momentum for the welfare state, the expansion of social and civil rights as well as the development of a largely decentralised state, which allows a high level of self-governance by the different autonomous communities.

Within the framework of democracy and freedoms which Spain enjoys, and which, unfortunately, member parties of our organisation still lack in some regions of the world, the Socialist International shows its deep concern and shares the rejection of the unilateral declaration of independence of Catalonia on 27 October, imposed by one part of the Catalan Parliament against the majority will of Catalans and Spaniards. This contravenes the constitution, the Autonomous Status of Catalonia, coexistence and the territorial integrity of the country.

In Catalonia there is no social majority in favour of independence, and much less supportive of actions that lead away from democratic legality. The strategy carried out by the pro-independence government of Catalonia has had serious political, economic and social consequences: in a few weeks more than 2,000 businesses have left, there has been an enormous split within the society complemented by growing international isolation and weakening of Catalan institutions.

On the other hand, the Socialist International notes that the intransigent position of the right-wing government in Spain for years, its rejection of dialogue and its lack of responses to the deterioration of the political situation has been highly irresponsible and has only contributed to aggravate the problem. As socialists we believe that the current government of Spain must once and for all offer a political response to the problem of Catalonia, as the response cannot be simply juridical.

In this context, the Socialist International supports the PSOE and the PSC in their proposal to promote a solution based on dialogue and negotiation, within the framework of the state of law and the Spanish democratic institutions, which culminates with a reform of the Spanish Constitution in a federal sense and a new Autonomous Statute to find a better fit for Catalonia within Spain.

Finally, our organisation considers that Catalonia needs a government that makes possible agreements of a broad majority, a change of course and a policy of reconciliation. Bridges must be rebuilt. For this reason, the Socialist International supports the candidacy of the First Secretary of the Catalan Socialists, Miquel Iceta, for the Presidency of the Catalan government in the elections which will take place in the autonomous region on 21 December.

Resolution on the establishment of the committee on gender equality

The Committee on Gender Equality will be composed by five women and five men from SI member parties elected by the Council.

It will be chaired by the President of the SI Women and the President of the SI.

Members of the Committee will assume specific responsibilities in order to carry out specific tasks of the Committee.

The Committee will have the goal to identify obstacles for gender equality, promote strategies and innovative ideas for achieving parity and ensuring that gender balance is crucial in the composition of party delegations at the SI meetings.

In this framework it will submit an annual report to the Socialist International to be discussed in the respective Council meeting.

Resolution on Equatorial Guinea

Original: Spanish

The Socialist International attentively followed the legislative and municipal elections that took place in Equatorial Guinea on 12 November. The political parties in opposition to the regime of General Teodoro Obiang Bguema, among them the SI-member Convergence for Social Democracy (CPDS), reported serious irregularities which demonstrate that those elections were neither transparent, free nor fair, given that the opposition had no access to any means of communication or sufficient resources.

Additionally, numerous opposition observers were expelled from polling stations and detained by the security forces, preventing the proper monitoring of the vote.

The official result of the aforementioned elections was more than 95% of the votes in favour of the governing party, unthinkable for a democratic regime.

The SI Council, meeting in Barcelona on 24-25 November 2017, condemns the legislative and municipal elections held in Equatorial Guinea on 12 November and requests that its member parties and the governments that they support do not recognise the results of those elections.

The SI Council supports the Equatoguinean political opposition and its member party, CPDS, and endorses the demands of this party that these polls are nullified and repeated under free, transparent and equal conditions, with the monitoring of an impartial international observation.

Declaration on Honduras, Nicaragua and Haiti

Original: Spanish

The member parties of the Socialist International, gathered in Barcelona on 24-25 November 2017, have been observing with concern the evolution of the situation of migrant workers from Central America and the Caribbean, particularly from Nicaragua, Haiti and Honduras, who enjoy temporary protection status. These workers have been subject to an ultimatum from the current administration of the United States under which 59,000 Haitians, 57,000 Hondurans and 2,500 Nicaraguans are to return to their countries of origin. This results in incalculable damage both in the household and national economies of these populations, further provoking social and family breakup, damage to education, health and livelihoods, having lost work and been removed from the country.

In view of the above, the Council of the Socialist International calls on the governing authorities and the Congress of the United States to reconsider this decision and to make a reality the Declaration of Independence of 1776 that "all men are created equal", which is also proclaimed in Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and specifically, the statute of permanent residency for these migrants.

The SI Council expresses its solidarity with these fraternal populations, as solidarity is not simply a motto, but we are all citizens of a global reality and all refugees from human conditions, violence and terror.

The SI Council requests that temporary protection status (TPS) is kept in force and that the ultimatum is dropped.

Declaration on North Korea

The situation on the Korean peninsula, examined in detail by the SI Presidium in September of this year and addressed in a statement issued from the UN Headquarters in New York, continues to represent a grave challenge to the international community.

The Council considers that the development of atomic weapons by the North Korean regime, in violation of UN Security Council resolutions, threatens stability and peace in Asia and the Pacific and must end. Aggressive and provocative actions by North Korea are also having global repercussions, and raise the chilling prospect of a conflict between states with the capability to launch nuclear weapons. Therefore, we call on all states in the region and the United States to refrain from statements, initiatives or military activity that might further escalate tensions in that area.

The SI reiterates the necessity of seeking a political solution to the tensions on the Korean peninsula, in line with its fundamental commitment to peace and diplomacy. The SI will work to define new initiatives to relieve this potentially catastrophic situation, working in consultation and dialogue with partners on the Korean peninsula and regional actors, including its member party in Japan and representatives from China, in order to promote and advance a solution that takes into account the vital regional implications of the current circumstances.

The Winter Olympics in PyeongChang, South Korea, in February 2018 give a unique opportunity for a symbolic truce as stated in the UN resolution adopted unanimously on 13

November 2017. The consensus for the resolution included the Republic of Korea and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, as well as the future hosts of the Olympic Games: Japan, China, France and the USA.

Resolution on the Kurdish People

In Iran, human rights violations have become routine and normalised. The Iranian Regime does not pay attention to international conventions when it comes to human rights. The international community needs to react and remind the Iranian regime as often as possible about basic human rights.

The Iranian regime does not fulfil its responsibilities when it comes to its own people. In the case of the powerful earthquake two weeks ago, it has not even allowed the international community to get involved in helping the population. The international community needs to help the Kurdish people in reconstructing their houses and recovering after the catastrophe by providing help and getting involved directly, since the Iranian regime does not offer its assistance to the Kurds.

The Kurdish case in Iran deserves the chance of peaceful negotiations but unfortunately at the present time, the Iranian regime is not ready or able to do that.

In Iraqi Kurdistan, the SI supports the implementation of the Iraqi constitution and the stopping of all kinds of violence against the Kurdish people. It condemns the military measures taken by the Iraqi government in the Kurdistan region, which is a violation of the Iraqi constitution. We call on the Iraqi government to implement a peaceful solution and share power with the Kurds, allowing them to govern in Iraq in accordance with the framework of the Iraqi constitution, and to start non-conditional negotiations with the KRG. We also call on the Iraqi government to protect the rights of the Kurdish people in disputed areas and to withdraw the militias from there.

In Syria, we salute the liberation of Raqqa, the so-called capital of the terrorists of Daesh, by the Syrian Democratic Forces and the international coalitions. We reiterate that the only solution to the Syrian question is a political solution, with the participation of all the democratic representatives of the Syrian people including of course the representatives of the Kurdish people. The final aim of the whole procedure will be the creation of a federal democratic Syria, that will promote peace, stability and freedom.

In Turkey, Erdogan's government should allow the political dialogue to be resumed and release political prisoners and journalists. The Turkish government needs to return to the process of finding a peaceful solution to the Kurdish question.

The Socialist International supports the reactivation of the SI Committee on the Kurdish Question, and the holding of a meeting in the Kurdistan region of Iraq to focus on the Kurdish case and creating harmony among the Kurdish members of the SI.

Resolution on the elections in Nicaragua

Original: Spanish

The Council of the Socialist International welcomes the completion of municipal elections on 5 November in Nicaragua. These elections were monitored by the Organization of American States (MAE-OAE), headed by the Vice-President of the Electoral Court of Uruguay, Wilfredo Penco, accompanied by 60 observers and experts in electoral organisation, registration and technology, inclusion of political parties, finance and electoral law. They observed the elections on 5 November in the fifteen departments and two autonomous regions.

At this election, 153 mayors and vice-mayors were elected along with their respective municipal councillors. The Sandinista Front won 135 of these with a participation of 52%. The Council of the Socialist International welcomes the success of its member party, the Sandinista National Liberation Front, in the elections in Nicaragua and congratulates the people of Nicaragua.

Declaration on the Rohingya people

The SI Council reiterates the call of the SI Presidium, made from the United Nations in New York in September of this year, for an end to violence against the Rohingya people in Myanmar, and condemns the persecution suffered by this minority. The continued restrictions placed on access to the conflict zone for aid agencies and representatives of the UN are a clear indication of attempts to cover up the reality of the atrocities that have been committed in an attempt to forcibly remove the Rohingya from their homes and villages. There is overwhelming evidence of systematic violations of human rights and serial persecution on the grounds of ethnicity in Rakhine province, and those responsible must be held accountable. This ethnic cleansing has led more than 600,000 refugees to flee across the border into Bangladesh.

The SI has previously called for the right of return for those forced to leave the country, and though a recent pact allows for the repatriation of some of the Rohingya, it is meaningless without an end to the repression that has been imposed upon them for decades. The right of return must therefore be accompanied by the suspension of military action and allowing of the delivery of humanitarian aid by the UN and other international organisations. Without these, there is no guarantee that those who return to their home will not continue to suffer discrimination at the hands of those who forced them from their homes, and perpetrated heinous acts of violence. Until the Rohingya are safely able to return to their homes in Myanmar, those who have crossed into neighbouring countries must be assured of humanitarian assistance and given all necessary support to rebuild their lives.

The SI Council reiterates the responsibility that the government of Myanmar has towards the Rohingya minority, which must no longer be denied fundamental rights. The Burmese leadership must open a full dialogue to address minority rights and the need of the Rohingya to be recognised and respected as full citizens of Myanmar.

Declaration on Slavery and Migration

Throughout the current global wave of migration, the SI Council and Committee on Migrations have consistently urged respect for the human rights of migrants and underlined the need to address the root causes of migration. The guiding principles of the organisation were laid out in 2015 in the SI Charter of the Rights of Migrants, which outlines that the need to overcome poverty, escape conflict and rise to the challenge posed by economic and environmental hardship is behind the majority of cases of migration and exile.

The SI Charter is a demonstration of the commitment of the member parties of the SI to fight to overcome the injustices, discrimination and racist and xenophobic practices faced by migrants. In light of the situation currently being faced by migrants in Libya, the Council strenuously underlines the provision of Article 5 of the charter, which states: "All practices such as slavery, servitude, forced or obligatory labour, and human trafficking shall be prohibited."

The recent emergence of clear evidence of the selling of humans as slaves in Libya is a shocking and abhorrent demonstration of complete disregard for the human rights of migrants who have in many cases been taken unwittingly into the country by human traffickers under false

pretences. Migrants, in Libya as in the whole world, are among the most vulnerable in society and are particularly prone to exploitation and mistreatment.

The SI Council reaffirms the fundamental commitment of SI member parties to the Charter of the Rights of Migrants, and strenuously rejects all violations of the basic rights of migrants around the world. It entrusts the SI Committee on Migrations, which has been re-established for the current inter-Congress period, to continue the engagement of the SI in this area, working to uphold the rights of migrants and develop concrete proposals and initiatives to alleviate the root causes of this phenomenon.

Resolution on the situation in Venezuela

Original: Spanish

The Council of the Socialist International reaffirms the resolution made on 3-4 November in Santo Domingo during the meeting of the Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean:

- To immediately release the political prisoners and ensure respect for the human rights of all Venezuelans to create the conditions for finding ways that lead to a satisfactory solution of the political crisis.
- To request the opening of a humanitarian channel which can immediately address the complex food and health emergency that the Venezuelan people are suffering.
- To ensure that the presidential elections in 2018 are free and fair without prisoners or those disqualified, under the leadership of a new electoral authority that guarantees their full credibility, together with effective qualified international observers from the European Union, OAS and the United Nations. The legitimacy and independence of the electoral authority are essential elements for the sovereign will of the Venezuelan people to be expressed and respected.
- To respect the National Assembly and all its members in the exercising of their duties. To respect the separation of powers established in the Constitution, the state of law and democratic principles, and to respect the self-determination of the Venezuelan people.
- The Council hopes that the process of dialogue and negotiation will be constructive and serious in the forthcoming talks on 1 and 2 December in the Dominican Republic, accompanied by international facilitators and guarantors, and that it will be able to deliver results and respond democratically and peacefully to the serious crisis in Venezuela.

Declaration on Yemen

The SI Council calls for urgent action to address the humanitarian crisis in Yemen, where food insecurity is affecting approximately 60 percent of the population, an estimated 17 million people. Of these, seven million are at risk of famine, while three million have fled their homes. In all, it is thought that 9.8 million Yemenis are in acute need of humanitarian assistance, and there remains a shortfall of approximately \$1 billion in funding for the humanitarian response.

The recent blockade imposed by the Saudi-led coalition has undoubtedly exacerbated the crisis in Yemen and led to further suffering and loss of life. Preventing humanitarian assistance from reaching the civilian population is a violation of international law. The SI repeats its condemnation of indiscriminate airstrikes and the use of cluster munitions by the international coalition, another violation of international law. These have killed and wounded thousands of civilians in Yemen. Indiscriminate rocket attacks and the laying of banned antipersonnel landmines by both sides in the conflict have also claimed the lives of hundreds of civilians.

Those responsible for violations of human rights and international law during the Yemeni conflict must be held accountable.

The SI has a deep and longstanding commitment to the Yemeni people and the Yemeni Socialist Party (YSP), its member in that country. The Secretary General of the SI had visited the capital, Sana'a, and held meetings with members of the government, political leaders, party representatives and activists at a time when there was hope for a peaceful and democratic future for all citizens of Yemen, a prospect which today seems further than ever from being realised. The SI will continue to offer its support and solidarity to its member party and the citizens of Yemen as they face this extreme hardship.

The humanitarian situation has already reached unprecedented levels, and must not be allowed to deteriorate further. As a matter of priority, the SI Council calls for:

An immediate end to the blockade and the resumption of food imports to all Yemeni ports
A commitment from the international community to fully fund humanitarian response efforts
The granting of access for aid agencies to all those in Yemen who are in desperate need of relief and assistance.

At the origin of the Yemeni crisis is the conflict that has wracked the country since 2015, and until Yemen is at peace there is no prospect of an end to the suffering of its civilian population. It is therefore paramount that the warring parties take steps to bring the conflict to an end, in the interests of all Yemenis, with the support and assistance of the international community.

The unilateral decision on Jerusalem by the United States of America

6 December 2017

The formal recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel is a deeply troubling act by the United States that will have damaging and far-reaching consequences for the pursuit of peace in the Middle East. The deep significance of Jerusalem as a historical holy site for Jews, Muslims and Christians makes its final status central to any durable resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The future of Jerusalem is therefore not one that can be decided unilaterally by any one nation, a fact that has long been recognised by the international community and previous US presidents, both Republican and Democrat.

The foreign policy of the current US administration has been characterised by unilateral decisions taken with little regard for the global consensus or the wider outcome of such actions. Recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, while continuing to deny the legitimate claims of the Palestinian people for an independent state, extinguishes any notion that the United States will act as a dependable mediator by legitimising the Israeli occupation of East Jerusalem, which has until now lacked any international recognition and continues to be in violation of international law.

Following a number of years without any meaningful progress, this decision all but ends hopes that diplomatic efforts can be revived in the short term, exacerbating tension in the region and creating the potential for renewed violence and unrest. The SI, while recognising the anger and frustration that many Palestinians will be feeling, urges all those who continue to be committed to a two-state solution and an end to occupation to respond peacefully to this latest setback, through diplomatic and political initiatives.

The fundamental commitment of the SI to a two-state solution for Israel and Palestine remains unchanged, though the voices of those on both sides who are working for peace have today been overrun. The SI has repeatedly called for the immediate and unconditional recognition of

the State of Palestine on the 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital, including at its XXV Congress earlier this year when it called upon all governments that had not yet done so to recognise Palestine as an investment in peace between Israelis and Palestinians. The SI reiterates this call today and urges all those governments that pursue a peaceful outcome to this longstanding conflict, to now recognise the Palestinian state, thus demonstrating that the wider international community continues to be committed to the two-state solution, ending the Israeli occupation and reaching a just and lasting peace based on international law.

Meeting of the SI Africa Committee in Luanda, Angola

12-13 December 2017



The African member parties of the Socialist International convened in Luanda on 12-13 December 2017, hosted by the SI's member party in Angola, the MPLA. The Committee's discussions centered on two main themes: "For humane, just and democratic policies – our role and our commitment in Africa" and "Securing peace and resolving conflicts in the Great Lakes Region".

The meeting was opened by Julião Mateus Paulo "Dino Matross", from the host party, and by the SI Secretary General. In his opening address, Julião Mateus Paulo referred to this important moment in Angola's history following the last elections which their candidate had won with 61% of the vote, and the new cycle that had now begun. They aimed for greater economic diversification with less dependency on oil, a transformation accompanied by a process of reforms of the State and the judicial system, and to ensure employment, better services, more social justice and a better quality of life. On the international scene, he pointed to the increasing tensions and underlined the need for cooperation with the United Nations for peaceful solutions to the multiple conflicts in the world. Regarding Africa, he spoke of the conflicts in the Great Lakes region, in Somalia, Nigeria, Libya, Sudan, Central African Republic and in Mali, which had led to illegal emigration in large numbers and under inhumane conditions. He reiterated that Africa was rich in natural resources but poor in development. Within the SI we were united in the need to work together in addressing the problems of the continent.

The SI Secretary General Luis Ayala congratulated the President of the Republic, João Lourenço, on his election victory, expressing his satisfaction and honour at having been able to accompany the electoral process and the transformation that Angola was going through. He welcomed João Lourenço's approach to the work of his government to "improve what is good, correct what is wrong". The commitment of the President to combat corruption deserved the attention and respect of all leaders. Angola had progressed considerably since achieving peace in 2002 and Lourenço provided a solid vision and leadership for the future. As social democrats and socialists we stood true to our principles and promises, committed to guaranteeing freedoms and the respect for people's rights, men, women and the youth. In the SI we remain firm in the fight against economic inequality, in responding to the challenges of sustainable development and to improving people's lives. Recognising the world of conflicts we live in, he reiterated the need to tackle the deficit of democracy, the problem of inequality, and increase justice and solidarity, to ensure peace.

Commencing with the theme of Securing peace and resolving conflicts in the Great Lakes region, the Committee heard a key-note speech by the Angolan Minister of Foreign Affairs, Manuel Augusto, who highlighted Angola's performance in resolving conflicts, noting that while there was underway a process for pacification and stabilisation in the East of the DRC, new conflicts were emerging in Burundi, Central African Republic, Sudan, and South Sudan. He spoke of the recent summit involving the Heads of State of Angola, Congo Brazzaville and the DRC, an initiative of Angolan President João Lourenço, and reiterated Angola's commitment to the search for peace and conflict resolution in the region. Members of the committee engaged in an active debate on this subject and benefited from a question and answer session with the Minister.

On the theme of humane, just and democratic policies – our role and our commitment in Africa, a key-note speech was presented by Manuel José Nunes Júnior, MPLA political bureau member and a State Minister, in a session which included a wide range of perspectives with many contributions from representatives of member parties in Africa.

The meeting offered the opportunity for participants to share information on the national situation in their respective countries. Numerous reports were presented, including on the crisis affecting the Anglophone population in Cameroon; the grave developments that have been taking place in Togo over the last four months; the situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo where the government has committed to holding elections on 23 December 2018; the current climate in Equatorial Guinea following the 12 November elections, where to no one's surprise the ruling party won all but one of the seats in the Chamber of deputies, every seat in the Senate and every local council; the situation regarding Chad, Mali, Niger, Senegal, and Guinea, whose President Alpha Condé, an SI member, is the head of the African Union. An in-depth presentation on the current situation in Angola was also presented by João de Almeida Martins, member of the MPLA Political Bureau.

The Committee re-elected Emmanuel Golou (PSD, Benin) and Ebrahim Ebrahim (ANC, South Africa) as chair and vice-chair of the Committee respectively.

Following the discussions and the work of those gathered in Luanda, a Declaration was issued reflecting key aspects of the debates.

Luanda Declaration

Original: Spanish

The member parties of the Socialist International meeting in Luanda on 12-13 December, hosted by the MPLA, the member party in Angola, declare:

1. Their satisfaction and joy to see that the MPLA, through the work undertaken by the government of President João Lourenço, is implementing an ambitious programme and a set of priorities that respond to the aspirations of the Angolan people, within the framework of a democracy fully consolidated and strengthened by the voice of the people in the elections that took place last August, elections that were totally free and fair.
2. We appreciate and support the objectives set out by President Lourenço to reaffirm political institutions and democracy by strengthening the rule of law, the fight against corruption, the diversification of the economy and policies that will lead to the improvement of the living conditions of the Angolan people.
3. We welcome the commitment undertaken by President Lourenço to put first the interests of the Angolan people in the construction of a country and a society of opportunities for all citizens, giving priority to social progress, to inclusion, to the fight against poverty, to economic growth and to future advances in the benefit for all.
4. We unanimously express our gratitude and pride at the task that our comrades in the MPLA and the President of the Republic of Angola have undertaken today in this new phase of their country's history, wishing them every success in their work.
5. At the same time, we congratulate President Lourenço on his efforts and initiatives in regard to the stability and democratic certainty in the Great Lakes region following his recent meeting with his fellow Heads of State of Congo Brazzaville and of the Democratic Republic of Congo, which formalised the holding of elections in the DRC agreed to take place on 23 December 2018, a fundamental factor for the stability in the whole of this region.
6. We will continue to count on the contribution, enthusiasm and support of the MPLA to the work of the Socialist International at the regional and global level, in favour of peace, democracy and the freedoms and rights of all, to face the challenges that are common to our political family in the search for a world with more justice and more solidarity.

In relation to the expectations of our political family in regard to Congo:

1. We call on the government of the DRC and the state institutions to guarantee and create all the necessary conditions for the holding of free and fair elections in order to ensure the participation of the different political forces, from the government as well as from the opposition and all the citizens, capable of leading to a peaceful transition and to a democratically elected government within the time limit prescribed and established at the meeting of the three Heads of State of Angola, Congo-Brazzaville and the DRC.
2. The Socialist International, directly and through its members, is ready to contribute in an open and honest manner with their presence and participation in order to accompany and to support this electoral process during its different stages, assuming that the authorities of the country and the electoral institutions will be prepared to open their doors to international observers.

Concerning the serious developments that have been occurring in Togo during the last four months:

1. We support and express our sympathy and solidarity to the people of Togo who have been demonstrating peacefully and continually throughout the country in favour of their freedom that has been confiscated for more than fifty years by the same biological family. These peaceful demonstrations led by a coalition of fourteen opposition parties,

including the SI member party, the CDPA, demand: (a) the return to the Constitution of 1992 adopted by more than 97% of the votes in a referendum that is ignored by the regime, perpetuating their permanence in power despite the will manifested in the ballot boxes to limit the number of periods of mandates in the government of the country; (b) the liberation of all political prisoners and all those detained in the demonstrations that have been taking place from 19 August 2017.

2. We observe, with consternation and regret, the obstinate rejection of the Togo government to accept the legitimate demands of its people and we condemn the disproportionate use of force by the illegal regime to suppress the people's aspirations. At the same time, we reaffirm that the democratic alternation of power is a natural right that cannot be indefinitely denied to the Togolese people and we call on our members to act in their respective countries in support of the Togolese people.

With respect to Western Sahara:

1. We express our support for the Secretary-General of the United Nations and his newly appointed Personal Envoy in their efforts to achieve a political, peaceful, fair and lasting solution, mutually acceptable for both sides in the conflict, in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions.

In relation to the dramatic and worrying evolution of the crisis affecting the English speaking population in Cameroon:

1. We deplore the loss of human lives within the civilian population as well as within the ranks of the defence and security forces. We urge President Biya to open a frank and sincere dialogue with the different credible actors in Cameroonian society, in order to avoid the radicalisation of populations in the English-speaking regions of the Northwest and Southwest that would benefit the secessionists and other opportunists. We give encouragement to the Social Democratic Front (SDF) in their search for a lasting solution to this crisis by means of a dialogue at every level and under any shape or form.

In what concerns the efforts for achieving peace in the African continent:

1. We reaffirm our full commitment and support to the Heads of State and to the leaders of the SI parties in the African continent, like those in Mali and Niger, or Burkina Faso, that today work to ensure peace, to stop the terror and to provide a secure environment for all their citizens. At the same time, we wish to state our firm solidarity with all the peoples and nations of Africa that suffer the impact of terror and the consequences of the painful conflicts that affect the nations of the continent from Nigeria and South Sudan to Somalia.

Our appreciation to the MPLA and to our comrades in Angola:

1. Finally, we wish to express our profound gratitude for the fraternity and warm hospitality extended to us by our comrades of the MPLA during the course of our work in Luanda.

The SI warns of a new humanitarian catastrophe in Syria

25 January 2018

The Turkish military incursion into Syrian territory has brought a dangerous new dimension to the conflict in that country, with severe humanitarian repercussions for the civilian populations in the targeted areas. These innocent victims of the latest surge of violence have previously suffered at the hands of both the regime and the terrorist forces and once again find themselves at the centre of a conflict they are powerless to prevent.

According to United Nations spokespersons and conflict monitors in Syria, the Turkish offensive has already resulted in the loss of civilian life and displacement of at least 5,000 civilians, a number that is certain to rise. Of the 324,000 people that currently live in the affected area, as many as 40 percent were already displaced, many of them more than once. Those who are most vulnerable are reportedly unable to flee, placing them at even greater risk.

The SI has consistently reiterated its support to all those working to establish a democratic, non-sectarian, ethnically plural and gender equal society in northern Syria. In the struggle to defeat Daesh, the SI recognises the role played by Syrian Kurds and the hardship and heavy losses that they have suffered for this cause. The SI also acknowledges the dangers created by terrorist attacks in Turkey and has repeatedly condemned such attacks. However, the Turkish offensive 'Olive Branch', risks not only destabilising a relatively peaceful area of Syria, but could jeopardise international efforts to eliminate Daesh and undermine the UN-backed peace process in Syria.

The Socialist International therefore calls on the Turkish government to stop military operations that undermine the efforts of achieving regional peace and threaten civilian life. Recognising the legal obligation of states, Turkey must allow humanitarian assistance to once more reach Afrin, where 60 percent of the population were dependent on humanitarian aid even before the current military operations began.

Socialist International SG in Costa Rica

February 2018



“Costa Rica es una democracia sólida”

Luis Ayala, secretario general de la Internacional Socialista:

El chileno Luis Ayala, secretario general de la Internacional Socialista (IS), estuvo de visita en el país como observador de las pasadas elecciones del 4 de febrero. La IS es una organización global que alberga a partidos y organizaciones socialdemócratas, laboristas y

socialistas, estando presentes en todos los continentes y en muchos gobiernos.

Reconocidos como un actor político dentro de la comunidad internacional, la IS está presente en la vida democrática de los países luchando por una mayor igualdad en todos los ámbitos.

Ayala en su paso por el país conversó con la sub directora de DIARIO EXTRA, Sandra Cordero, en compañía del dirigente liberacionista Bernal Jiménez, quien hoy funge como vicepresidente de este organismo. El siguiente es un extracto de la conversación.

¿Cuál es el compromiso de la Internacional Socialista?

-Es una la lucha por las libertades y los derechos protegidos dentro de la perspectiva política a través del sistema democrático, sin ella los derechos son coartados y se debilitan las libertades. Otro signo de identidad es la búsqueda de mayor justicia en la sociedad, trabajamos por mayor igualdad de derechos y sociedades más solidarias.

¿Cuál es el motivo de la visita al país?

-Tenemos un partido miembro que es Liberación Nacional (PLN). Hay una larga historia de asociación de distinguidos líderes que han jugado un papel protagónico importante en la historia de esta organización, Daniel Oduber, Luis Alberto Monge, Rolando Araya, Óscar Arias, Laura Chinchilla y hoy tenemos a Bernal Jiménez como vicepresidente. Siempre seguimos el trabajo de nuestros partidos.

También fue testigo de las elecciones el 4 de febrero...

-Claro, he tenido la oportunidad de estar en San José y en Cartago, en contacto con la gente en las votaciones. Costa Rica es desde nuestro punto de vista una democracia muy sólida, la conocemos, yo soy chileno y me siento muy cómodo aquí, de la misma manera resolvemos nuestros problemas.

¿Ha visto lo sucedido aquí en otro país, donde un solo tema polarizó la elección?

-Somos una organización global que lucha contra la exclusión y la gente es excluida de muchas formas, el tema que aquí se planteó lo veo como el desafío que tenemos de incluir a la gente. Donde haya desequilibrio y distancias, la socialdemocracia siempre se ha planteado construir sociedades inclusivas y disminuir la distancia entre los seres humanos. Yo veo esto como un reto de Costa Rica y de toda Latinoamérica de avanzar en incluir a más gente. Creo que la fuerza y la madurez que tienen aquí, podrán sortear estos desafíos, que no solo es el matrimonio igualitario, también la desigualdad, la pobreza, el empleo, la educación, en fin muchos otros temas.

¿Pero ha visto algo similar en otro país?

-Fue una elección muy atípica. Pero, como dije, quedan otros grandes temas, el déficit, la inclusión de género, la seguridad, etc. Nosotros pensamos que se deben fortalecer las democracias, los derechos, las libertades y procurar una mayor igualdad. Los socialdemócratas hemos sido los arquitectos de la democracia en las últimas décadas y este país ha ido por el camino correcto.

¿Es correcto decir que hay crisis en algunos partidos y democracias latinoamericanas?

-Yo diría que hay desafíos. Este es un período de muchos desafíos no solo aquí sino en Europa. Tenemos estos populismos en distintos lugares que se manifiestan y son desafíos para la democracia, vivimos conflictos en muchos países. Son desafíos a la paz en distintos lugares del mundo y son temas que la Internacional Socialista ha buscado jugar como un actor en la resolución de conflictos. Creo que se ocupa revalorizar el rol que cumple la política, los partidos, el papel de los ciudadanos, de los sistemas políticos democráticos y procesos tan simples como una elección, son muy importantes.

¿Qué opina la IS sobre la Venezuela de hoy?

-Lamentablemente ahí no hay democracia, no hay libertad y los derechos no son reconocidos. No hay elecciones libres, tenemos presos políticos, la situación humanitaria y de la economía es trágica, la gente muere por la falta de productos para la diálisis, que no tienen qué comer y que esto suceda en la América Latina del Siglo XXI no corresponde. Todos somos corresponsables y estamos detrás de las demandas del pueblo venezolano que sin duda logrará reivindicar la democracia cuando se le permita expresarse libremente.



Former president of Costa Rica and Nobel Peace laureate, Oscar Arias, with SI Secretary General Luis Ayala

SI denounces violation of freedom of assembly and other rights in Guinea Bissau

2 February 2018



SI SG and Presidium members, PAIGC leader and other local leaders and international guests

In the capital of Guinea Bissau, amid deep tensions, the IX Ordinary Congress of the SI member party, PAIGC, which was scheduled to be held in Bissau from 30 January to 4 February, was forcefully impeded from opening by government authorities and police, in a violation of freedom of assembly and other rights, which SI guests to the Congress firmly denounced.

On the 29th of January, the day before the Congress was due to open, the party leadership received a communication from the police authorities that the congress would not be allowed to proceed, an act that led hundreds of militants to occupy the party headquarters on the 30th, where the congress was due to be held. However, in the early hours of 31 January, the police forced their way into the building, expelling close to 300 PAIGC members, detaining a number of them, and occupying the premises in order to prevent the holding of the congress.

A number of international guests had arrived on the eve of the congress, invited to attend by the PAIGC, including the Secretary General of the SI, some of the SI Vice-Presidents from the region, and other party leaders and representatives. PAIGC leader Domingos Simões Pereira, on the morning of the 31st, held a meeting with the international guests, in which he explained the difficulties encountered by the party following the decision by the government to prevent the holding of their ordinary congress, which should have opened the day before. He reiterated the will of the party to hold the announced event. By the perseverance of the party leadership and despite the arbitrary impediments imposed, the congress finally opened on the 31st close to midnight in an outdoor space in the grounds of a hotel in the capital. The congress was then inaugurated in the open air, with speakers addressing the gathering out loud and with a hand-held megaphone. Thus, with the attendance of a large number of party delegates the working sessions of the congress were initiated.

The following morning, the 1st of February, the leader of the PAIGC, along with a number of leaders of different political parties of Guinea Bissau, held a special meeting with the Socialist International representatives and other guests invited to the congress, at which the media was also present. In this meeting, the leaders and representatives of the Guinea Bissau political parties participating closed ranks with the PAIGC. The Secretary General of the Socialist International addressed the gathering denouncing the act by the authorities as an undemocratic attempt to silence the voice of the people and to dismantle crucial rights and freedoms protected by the constitution and the law and fundamental principles of a democratic system, and he conveyed the unequivocal solidarity of the SI with the PAIGC and all the democratic political forces in the country. Other members of the SI Presidium and party leaders and representatives from different political forces also addressed the meeting expressing their rejection of these developments.

Later that day, an official statement was issued by a delegation of ECOWAS, the organisation of West African states, in which it called on the Bissau government to respect previous Accords on the political situation in Guinea Bissau or to face sanctions, and deplored the lack of respect for freedom of assembly. At the same time, it launched an appeal to the authorities of Guinea Bissau to fully comply with the rule of law and to respect human rights, including the right to free assembly, while exhorting the national security and defence forces to maintain a neutral republican position in regard to the country's political actors.

Following all these developments, the IX Ordinary Congress of the PAIGC resumed close to midnight on the 1st of February at the party headquarters, in line with the sustained efforts of the PAIGC leadership, of their members, the other democratic political actors of the country, and the unanimous support of all the specially invited international guests to the event.

Addendum: Joint statement issued on 3 February 2018 by the African Union and the United Nations on Guinea Bissau

The Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Moussa Faki Mahamat, and the Secretary-General of the United Nations, António Guterres, express concern over the protracted political crisis in Guinea-Bissau despite the multiple opportunities offered to the main political

stakeholders to arrive at a consensual arrangement. They denounce the actions being taken by those who seek to obstruct and prevent a resolution of the crisis.

They condemn the recent actions taken by the national authorities to prevent the African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cabo Verde (PAIGC) from convening and holding its Party Congress, including the directive given to national security services to evacuate and shutter the party's headquarters. They call on all relevant authorities to strictly adhere to international human rights and humanitarian law and to immediately remove all restrictions on the right to peaceful assembly, political participation and freedom of speech.

The Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the Secretary-General of the United Nations fully endorse the recent decisions on Guinea-Bissau taken by the Authority of Heads of State and Government of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) on the margins of the African Union Summit in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 27 January, and endorsed by the 30th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union on 29 January 2018, and welcome the communiqué issued by the ECOWAS ministerial mission that visited Guinea-Bissau on 31 January and 1 February. They support the measures being taken by ECOWAS against "political obstructionists" in the country. They reiterate their endorsement of the centrality of the Conakry Agreement which, inter alia, provides for the appointment of a consensual Prime Minister, and call on the main political stakeholders to faithfully and urgently implement this Agreement, as well as the ECOWAS Roadmap to which they have all signed up to.

The Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the Secretary-General of the United Nations reaffirm their commitment to continue to closely follow all political developments and to support ECOWAS in its efforts to ensure a swift resolution of the protracted crisis in Guinea-Bissau, and stand ready to employ additional measures, should the situation warrant it.

Conference au Paraguay

22 February 2018



From left to right: Rafael Michelini, SI Vice President, NE Uruguay; Rafael Filizzola, President of the Paraguayan PDP; Mario Nalpatian, SI Vice-President, ARF Armenia; Luis Ayala, SI Secretary General; Efraín Alegre, presidential candidate of GANAR, Paraguay; Alejandro Guiller, Senator from Chile; Desirée Massi, Senator from Paraguay; Edgar Giménez, Secretary General of the PDP; Peter Arthur Santacruz, Senator from Paraguay.

In advance of the forthcoming general elections in Paraguay, to be held on 22 April 2018, the SI member Progressive Democratic Party (PDP) of Paraguay hosted a conference in Asunción on 22 February under the heading "United building the future: Experiences of Alliances in Government",

with the participation of Efraín Alegre, the presidential candidate of the alliance “Gran Alianza Nacional Renovada” (GANAR) of which the PDP is a member, along with SI guest speakers and other invited political personalities.



Founding Congress of The Movement for Change, Kinima Allagis

1 March 2018

SI condemns terrorist attacks in Ouagadougou

3 March 2018

The Socialist International unreservedly condemns the terrorist attacks perpetrated in Ouagadougou on 2 March, which targeted the Burkinabe army headquarters and the French embassy. These barbaric acts, which claimed the lives of dozens of people, will not weaken the resolve of those who are tirelessly working to rid Burkina Faso and the Sahel region of the threat of violence and terror.

Burkina Faso has suffered multiple terrorist attacks in recent years, and the SI expresses its deepest solidarity with the Burkinabe people, and its member party in that country, the MPP, as they come to terms with this latest deadly incident. Terrorism destroys life and harms the wellbeing of all citizens affected, and is a major obstacle to economic and social development.

The terrorist threat is not restricted to Burkina Faso, and the SI offers its wholehearted support to the efforts of Burkinabe President Roch Marc Christian Kaboré and his government to combat terrorist insurgents across the Sahel region, in cooperation with other members of the G5 Sahel joint task force. Any and all attempts to undermine regional cooperation against the ongoing terror threat must be met with renewed determination and strengthened resolve.

Leaders from the G5 Sahel countries have recently called for increased funding from the international community for their joint initiatives, which are ever more pertinent in light of the tragic events in Ouagadougou. The SI reiterates the calls made by its Presidium in September 2017 for international partners to offer their full support to this body, whose mission is vital to the security of the region.

SI SG at the 84th INC Congress

7 March 2018



Rahul Gandhi, President of the INC, with Luis Ayala, Secretary General of the SI



Anand Sharma, INC Deputy Parliamentary Party Leader; Manmohan Singh, former Prime Minister of India; Luis Ayala, SI Secretary General; and Sonia Gandhi, Indian National Congress, Twitter

Socialist International celebrates International Women's Day

8 March 2018



International Women's Day

The Socialist International today celebrates International Women's Day, in recognition of the continuing struggle for women's rights around the world. International Women's Day is of particular significance for the SI, as it was first marked as a result of a resolution of the Second International Conference of Socialist Women on the occasion of the 1910 Copenhagen International Socialist Congress. The cause of women's rights has been at the heart of the global socialist and social democratic movement since its inception, and remains key to its agenda to this day.

Since the establishment of International Women's Day,

a great deal of progress has undeniably been made in the pursuit of gender equality. Women have served at the highest level of elected office in many countries and have more opportunity than ever in large parts of the world when it comes to education and employment. Nonetheless, the objective of equality of women in government and society is yet to be achieved, as it is still the case that women are on average paid less than men for equivalent work, and are underrepresented at the highest levels of business and politics. It is therefore not enough to point to past achievements, but necessary to strive to address the structural and systematic injustices that continue to place half of the world's population at an unfair and unjustifiable disadvantage from the moment they are born.

Furthermore, the revelations that have come during the last year of countless incidents of sexual harassment and discrimination against women in the workplace across all industries, including politics, demonstrate that sexism, exploitation and sexual violence remain a serious problem. Such behaviour can never be justified, and the Socialist International stands in solidarity with all victims of workplace harassment and discrimination and committed to ensuring that this issue is not overlooked or forgotten. The only acceptable outcome is long-lasting change and the eradication of sexism and sexual harassment.

The Socialist International has a proud record of promoting and defending women's rights, both within the organisation and in its political work. On this International Women's Day we pay tribute to all the women working within our member parties and organisations to achieve equality for women and a brighter and more prosperous future for all.

Meeting at the 138th IPU Assembly in Geneva

25 March 2018



The SI held its meeting of parliamentarians from SI member parties in the context of the 138th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, IPU, which on this occasion took place in Geneva from 24 to 28 March.

The meeting, which was attended by parliamentarians from all continents, offered the opportunity for participants to exchange views on some of the key issues on the agenda of the

IPU Assembly and to discuss particular concerns of a national or international nature, with other colleagues from the social democratic family.

Discussions included exchanges on issues that had been put forward for adoption as emergency items at the Assembly, including that of the consequences of the US declaration on Jerusalem and the rights of the Palestinian people in Jerusalem in the light of the UN Charter and resolutions, and of violence against women in the workplace, in particular in parliaments, in the wake of the #MeToo movement. The meeting heard from the Palestinian representative on the developments in the six months since the previous meeting and the pressure they had been under by Israel and the USA since the decision by the US government to move its Embassy to Jerusalem, compounded by the further US decisions to cut its contributions to UNWRA with dire consequences for nearly 5 million Palestinian refugees, and to close the PLO office in Washington. During the discussions there were expressions of support and solidarity with the Palestinians and statements regarding the importance of tackling the issue of violence against women.

A further subject of attention by participants was the theme of strengthening the global regime for migrants and refugees, bearing in mind the UN-led process on the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) and the Global Compact for Refugees (GCR), which are due to be adopted at the end of this year. It was proposed to invite members participating in these parliamentary exchanges to contribute to develop common concepts in regard to these subjects for a shared approach from our political family on the GCM and the GCR, further to previous SI positions and decisions on migrants and refugees.

In the discussion on migration and refugees, there were unanimous expressions of condemnation of Myanmar over its treatment of the Rohingya people and the failure of Aung San Suu Kyi to speak out, constituting a betrayal both of the Burmese people and of the confidence that the international community had placed in her. It was pointed out that the Socialist International stance in this regard was very clear from the beginning of this tragedy, however, it was noted that members of the international community continued to pour money into Myanmar and action was needed to stop that and to change political attitudes.

The meeting received a report on the continuing grave situation in Venezuela which had led to the exodus of over 4 million Venezuelans during the last few years. The UNHCR has been calling on the international community to extend their assistance to these Venezuelans who have been forced to leave their country. It was reported that the population was suffering from hunger and misery, as well as a lack of pharmaceutical products and treatments for chronic diseases. The lack of food was compounded by the destruction of the country's agriculture industry and the gross mismanagement of the economy by the government. It was also reported that the majority in the national parliament, two thirds of which were the opposition, were being punished by the government and had not been paid a salary since the beginning of 2016.

SI heartened by massive youth protests in cities of the US and other countries against gun violence

26 March 2018

The Socialist International is heartened by the massive number of young people who protested in cities across the United States and worldwide as part of the 'March for Our Lives' on Saturday 24 March. This diverse grassroots movement, led by young people whose lives have been profoundly affected by gun violence, has been truly inspirational, and should mark a turning point to bring about real reform on the issue of gun control in the US.

By exercising their right to protest in order to stand up for what they believe in, these courageous young people have issued a clarion call to elected representatives. Those returned to enact the will of the people must now respond to the urgent calls for legislation to prevent school massacres from ever happening again, knowing that any who fail to heed those calls will be held accountable at the ballot box.

The debate surrounding gun violence and firearms regulation in the United States has drawn attention to the negative influence of special interests and lobbying groups. The democratic process relies on politicians acting in the interests of the citizens, rather than those who financed their election campaign. As the SI and its members have stated on many occasions, democracy is damaged, and progress and development are impeded when special interests are too powerful and able to influence the outcome of elections.

The bravery, determination and optimism of those who participated in the March for Our Lives are a reminder that it is possible to make an impact for positive change and the SI wholeheartedly supports their cause. For the SI, it is self-evident that children and young adults should be able to grow up and attend school and university in safety, anywhere in the world. We stand in solidarity with all those who have been affected by incidents involving gun violence on school and university campuses in the US, which have occurred at a rate in excess of one per week since the beginning of 2018.

SI denounces killing of unarmed Palestinians by Israel along Gaza border

1 April 2018

The Socialist International strongly denounces the killing of 16 Palestinians by the Israel Defence Forces during a major protest along Gaza's border with Israel on Friday. The protests were organised as part of a 'Great Return March' initiative in Gaza. In addition to the 16 killed, more than 700 are reported injured and required hospital treatment in Gaza, many of them having been shot with live ammunition. The use of deadly force against protesters and the scale of the loss of life represent a major escalation of the conflict in the region and a damaging blow to hopes for resuming the process for peace.

The SI supports and echoes the call of the UN Secretary-General and others for an independent inquiry into these violent events and the deadly response by the Israeli military. Israeli troops have an obligation to follow human rights law and ensure that lethal force is only used as a last resort. The response so far from the Israeli ministry of defence has been to reject all calls for an independent, transparent investigation, casting serious doubt on the legality of the military

response. In light of reports from human rights organisations that unarmed demonstrators were targeted by live ammunition, it is vital that Israel allow this inquiry to take place.

As the SI warned in December last year, recent setbacks to the peace process have had the effect of increasing tensions, creating the potential for the type of violence and unrest witnessed in the last days. The cycle of violence only serves to further damage any prospects for long-term peace as it undermines the moderate voices on both sides urging a return to negotiations.

The events of last Friday are proof that those in both Israel and Palestine who advocate for peace, among them SI member parties, are more than ever in need of international support and solidarity, to counteract the position of hard-line elements in both camps that conflict is inevitable. The objective of a negotiated, durable peace based on international law remains the only viable resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the commitment of the Socialist International to a two-state solution for Israel and Palestine living side by side remains unchanged.

SI at the VIII Summit of the Americas in Peru

1 April 2018



SI Secretary General Luis Ayala in Peru with Luis Florido, President of the Foreign Policy Commission of the National Assembly of Venezuela, at the Summit of the Americas

SI Secretary General Luis Ayala in Peru at the Summit of the Americas





Demonstration organized by APRA in solidarity with the Venezuelan opposition

SI in Paraguay for elections

22 April 2018



Presidential candidate Efrain Alegre (centre left) with SI Secretary General, Luis Ayala (centre right), and SI Vice-Presidents Rafael Michelini, PNE Uruguay (left) and Mario Nalpatian, ARF Armenia (right)



Declaration of the Socialist International on Nicaragua

23 April 2018

The death of nearly 30 Nicaraguan citizens as a result of the repression carried out by the national police and other armed groups against demonstrators during protests that have taken place in that country these last days following the Government's announcement of reforms to the social security system, can under no circumstances be justified and is totally unacceptable.

This loss of life and the deplorable violence used against the protestors have been a cause of deep consternation within the Socialist International. At the same time, we express our grave concern at the limitations imposed on the media and the undetermined number of detainees who should be immediately released.

A democratic State must always guarantee the life and protection of its citizens, and it is its duty to articulate responses to their demands and concerns, fully respecting their lives, their rights and their freedoms.

Today, we make a strong appeal to the Government of Nicaragua to immediately initiate a process for effective responses to the demands of its citizens, in a spirit of inclusion and justice, to re-establish social peace through initiatives that will allow the whole of the Nicaraguan population to recover the road to coexistence, within the framework of democracy.

SI attends 23rd session of the Palestine National Council

30 April 2018



SI President, George Papandreou, and SI Secretary General, Luis Ayala, attended the inaugural sitting of the 23rd session of the Palestine National Council, under the title "Al-Quds and protection of the Palestinian Legitimacy", held at the Presidential Headquarters in Ramallah on 30 April 2018, and an International Seminar organised in connection with that session.

George Papandreou and Luis Ayala, during their stay, laid a wreath at the mausoleum of Yasser Arafat, former President of the Palestinian National Authority and Chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organisation, in Ramallah



SI at the commemoration events on the 20th anniversary of the death of José Francisco Peña Gómez

8 May 2018



Luis Ayala defines Peña Gómez as a symbol of democratic socialism



SI Honorary President Ruben Berrios, PIP, Puerto Rico (centre left), SI Vice President Miguel Vargas (centre right), RD Minister of Foreign Affairs and PRD Leader, SI Secretary General Luis Ayala (right)

Socialist International condemns killing of demonstrators in Gaza

15 May 2018

The Socialist International condemns the use of live fire by Israeli forces against protesters in Gaza, killing at least 60 people and injuring thousands. Monday's bloodshed bears terrible similarities to the events of 30 March this year, when several unarmed Palestinians were shot dead by the IDF during a major protest. Yesterday, Palestinians exercising their right to peaceful protest were once again targeted. Among the dead were a number of children under the age of 16. A loss of life on this scale has not been seen in Gaza since the end of the 2014 Israel-Gaza conflict and the SI stands today in solidarity with the people of Palestine.

Those responsible for these killings must be held to account. Earlier this year, calls made by the UN Secretary-General, members of the international community and the Socialist International, for an independent inquiry into the killings were rejected by the Israeli government. Without an investigation, a clear message is being sent that Israeli forces are able to act with impunity, and it is therefore of paramount importance that an independent and transparent UN investigation into these tragic events is allowed to take place, to ensure that they are never repeated. It should not need reiterating that Israeli troops have an obligation to follow human rights law and ensure that lethal force is only used as a last resort.

The protests took place on the day of the opening of the new embassy of the United States in Jerusalem, a decision by the US government which has severely damaged the pursuit of peace in the Middle East by unilaterally pre-empting the final status negotiations on Jerusalem, which holds such significance for Jews, Muslims and Christians. This decision, taken without regard for the global consensus on the path to peace in the Middle East or the wider ramifications of a political act affecting the sensitivities of millions of people across cultures and religions, coupled with the veto by the US in the UN Security Council of an independent investigation into the killings in Gaza, hinders the road to peace.

In light of the volatile situation and the rapidly diminishing prospects for achieving a sustainable peace in the region, it is incumbent on all those within the international community that wish to see a resolution to seven decades of conflict to urgently intensify their diplomatic efforts to achieve a two-state solution with Israel and Palestine living side by side in peace.

Meeting of the SI Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean in Montevideo, Uruguay

17-18 May 2018



A meeting of the Socialist International Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean took place in Montevideo on Thursday 17 and Friday 18 May 2018, hosted by the SI member party in Uruguay, Nuevo Espacio (NE).

During the opening session, the NE President and SI Vice-President, Senator Rafael Michelini, welcomed the more than fifty delegates (see list of participants), representing around twenty social democratic parties of the region. Michelini also welcomed the presence in this session of the Committee, of government and political authorities of the Uruguayan Frente Amplio, giving special thanks to the Vice-President of the country, Lucía Topolanski, and the former President José *Pepe* Mujica.

The President of Nuevo Espacio highlighted some of the characteristics that, in his opinion, can explain why his country has, for the third consecutive term, a centre-left coalition government, the Frente Amplio, whereas in some countries of Latin America and the Caribbean the forces of the social democratic family are living complex times. From its creation and then in government, the Frente has recognised the diversity of its members and also the underlying need of unity in its actions, as a process of synthesis within the group.

Miguel Vargas, as Chair of the Committee, thanked the host party and during his intervention he reflected on the violence in Latin America and the Caribbean, the challenges to public security, inequality and the importance of education to improve the current situation. The Dominican Foreign Minister recalled that Latin America and the Caribbean is the most violent region on the planet, according to recent studies of the WHO. The question of public security is a complex one and inequality on the continent is one of the elements that explain the violence. Vargas highlighted the importance of education to fight it in the medium and longer term. A better educated people have access to better jobs and better living conditions, therefore our countries must focus on establishing comprehensive education systems to promote creativity

through innovation and research and to prepare citizens to respond to the challenges of the forthcoming years, he said, in closing his remarks.

The Secretary General of the Socialist International, Luis Ayala, pointed out that the SI is a family that shares values, principles and also a collective memory, a fact that led him to remember in Montevideo a great Uruguayan leader who fell in the struggle for democracy, Zelmar Michelini, whom he had the opportunity to meet. He remembered as well the historic Dominican leader José Francisco Peña Gómez, as the 20th anniversary of his death was being commemorated. Peña Gómez was the first Chair of the SI Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean, following the road taken to extend the International beyond Europe and to transform it into a truly global organisation. Following on that path the SI, in its global action, was in solidarity with the liberation struggles in Africa, raising, in so doing, another pillar of the SI in that region of the world where today there are many parties of this political family in government in countries where today there is democracy, peace, rights and freedoms. The SI is also present in Asia, Eastern Europe and the former Soviet republics, a fact that makes it the biggest organisation of political parties on a global level. Currently, our movement faces the challenges of populism, emergent nationalisms with their consequent democratic setbacks, a growing level of insecurity due to open or latent conflicts in many places of the world, the effects of climate change on the planet and increasing inequality, all of which hands us a particular responsibility given our identity and our goals for peace, democracy and equality.

Following the opening session, the delegates debated the main themes set out in the agenda: “Working for the change we want: strengthening the institutions of the democratic state, ensuring rights and freedoms and improving human wellbeing”, and “Latin America and the Caribbean in the face of the global challenges of strengthening peace and security, building an economy of more equality, and responding in a just way to migration and the urgent situation of refugees”.

Participants from the different countries of the region addressed in detail the themes of the agenda, discussing as well the challenges posed by gender issues today in the region. The Committee was attended by and could listen to the interventions of the SI Vice-Presidents from Latin America and the Caribbean: Isabel Allende (PS, Chile), Elsa Espinosa (PRI, Mexico), Sandra Torres (UNE, Guatemala), Jesús Rodríguez (UCR, Argentina), Bernal Jiménez (PLN, Costa Rica), Víctor Benoit (Haiti), the SI Vice-President and host of the meeting, Rafael Michelini, and the Vice-Chair of the Committee, Eyra Ruiz (PRD, Panama).

The Committee had also the opportunity to hold exchanges with Alejandro Guillier and Efraín Alegre, candidates of the social democratic political forces in the last presidential elections in Chile and Paraguay, respectively, who shared their electoral experiences and their viewpoints about the big challenges faced by the countries of the region.

During the morning of the second day of the meeting, the delegates presented and shared views on the national situations in their respective countries. At the end of the discussions and as a result of them, the Committee adopted declarations stating its opinions on Bolivia, Guatemala, Haiti, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Venezuela and a declaration in honour of José Francisco Peña Gómez.



Resolution on Bolivia

Original: Spanish

The Socialist International Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean, meeting in Montevideo on 17-18 May 2018:

Reiterates the declaration of the XXV Congress of the Socialist International in May 2017 in Cartagena de Indias, in regard to judicial restrictions on political leaders in Latin America.

The Committee expresses once again its concern over the judicial restrictions in Bolivia that affect the leader of its member party National Unity, Samuel Doria Medina, by decisions of the courts that systematically restrict his trips abroad when these are of a political nature.

The Committee declares that to restrict his movements and the international dimension of his work, does not correspond to reasonable measures in a democratic state and rule of law.

Resolution on Guatemala

Original: Spanish

The Socialist International Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean meeting in Montevideo on 17-18 May:

Welcomes and recognises the advances made in the fight against corruption and impunity in this Central American country. Nevertheless, it warns against the worrying and progressive judicialisation of politics in Guatemala and the risk of the judiciary becoming politicised and involved in the conflicts and partisan political confrontations in that nation.

The phenomenon of the judicialisation of politics represents a threat for the consolidation of Guatemalan democracy because the judges and prosecutors become actors with the power to decide the direction in which politics are steered and then become the subject of suspicions of partiality.

The Committee calls on the operators of justice in that country to ensure independence and objectivity in their actions, on the political parties to deepen the reforms that consolidate the

democratic system and on the Guatemalan society to maintain the fight against poverty, corruption and the consolidation of peace.

Resolution on Haiti

Original: Spanish

The Socialist International Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean, meeting in Montevideo, capital of Uruguay, adopts the following resolution with regard to Haiti:

- 1.- Asks the progressive and democratic forces in Haiti to continue in their efforts to set in motion as soon as possible the Permanent Electoral Council and the Constitutional Council, two important institutions for strengthening the democratic process in that country;
- 2.- Urges all the democratic forces in Haiti to continue their work for the strengthening of the State institutions and for transparency;
- 3.- Promotes the implementation in that country of a policy of economic and social development capable of generating decent jobs to curb the migration of the Haitian population, giving back to the youth confidence in the future of their country.

Resolution on Nicaragua

Original: Spanish

The Socialist International Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean, meeting in Montevideo on 17-18 May 2018:

- 1.- Recalls the Socialist International declaration issued on 23 April 2018 regarding the situation in Nicaragua;
- 2.- Reiterates its consternation at the loss of so many lives and deplores the violence used against the demonstrators over the past few weeks;
- 3.- Affirms that it is only through democracy and the full respect of all freedoms and rights of its citizens, that Nicaragua will be able to advance towards a future of co-existence, social peace and progress for all;
- 4.- Demands an impartial and objective investigation into the deaths that have occurred during the incidents of these past weeks in order to clarify the facts and establish the corresponding responsibilities;
- 5.- The Committee will closely follow the dialogue underway between the parties to the conflict, recognising that this is the only possible and appropriate way forward to find a peaceful solution to the current crisis.

Resolution on Panamá

Original: Spanish

The Socialist International Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean, meeting in Montevideo on 17-18 May 2018:

Reiterate its interest in the fight against corruption and impunity in Panama. The Committee warns against the worrying and progressive judicialisation of politics in the country and the risk that the judicial power and public ministry may become politicised and involved in the political affairs of the country.

The phenomenon of judicialisation of politics represents a threat to the consolidation of Panamanian democracy, because some judges and prosecutors become actors that are able to have an impact on the direction of politics and to intimidate the leaders of the opposition.

The Committee calls the operators of justice and the Comptroller General of the Republic to safeguard the independence and objectivity in their actions, on the political parties to deepen the reforms that will consolidate the democratic system, and on the Panamanian society to remain vigilant against the threats to the institutions of democracy.

Resolution on Paraguay

Original: Spanish

The Socialist International Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean, meeting in Montevideo on 17-18 May, in its discussion on the strengthening of the democratic state in the region, made an assessment of the recent general elections in Paraguay which took place in April of this year, together with representatives of its member party in that country, the Progressive Democratic Party (PDP) and with the presidential candidate of the GANAR coalition, Efraín Alegre, leader of the Partido Liberal Radical Auténtico (PLRA).

The Committee members acknowledged the fact that the Paraguayan electoral process still suffers from a series of weaknesses and procedural gaps, which almost thirty years after the end of the dictatorship should have been overcome and which affect the trust and credibility of the electorate. In particular, the lack of rigour in the speed with which the counting of the votes was done and the partial and selective delivery of the election results, as well as the manipulation of opinion polls in the period prior to the elections, and even during the polling day itself, a fact that was made evident by the large disparity between the early results announced and the results that were subsequently communicated.

With regard to the electoral process itself, it is worth noting the civic spirit and the will of Efraín Alegre and the coalition that supported him, to mobilise the Paraguayan citizens in the search for legitimate and necessary objectives to strengthen and deepen democracy in the country, the political and state institutions, and their disposition and commitment to undertake the necessary reforms to enable Paraguay to achieve an effective democracy based upon solid institutions that work for the benefit of all its citizens.

The Committee recognised and encouraged Efraín Alegre and the members of his coalition present in the meeting, to continue their efforts and their work so that the Paraguayan people may be able to open up new perspectives and new phases in the political life of their country which will be possible within the framework of a full democracy, like the one that he and his colleagues aspire to and will enable Paraguay to enter the XXI century.

Resolution on Venezuela

Original: Spanish

The Socialist International Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean, meeting in Montevideo on 17-18 May 2018, expresses that:

The Socialist International has been closely involved for many years in the situation of Venezuelan and has been witnessing with concern the deterioration of its democracy and the growing authoritarianism in the exercise of different public functions in the country. The International has repeatedly reaffirmed through its different organs, and in particular within the Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean, its commitment to democracy in

Venezuela and the concerns about its decline. Along with this, the International has consistently denounced the violations of the human rights of Venezuelans, the restrictions on their freedoms and political rights, the worsening of the living conditions of the people and the polarisation of society.

The SI has always believed that the challenges to democracy must be responded to with more democracy. For this reason we welcomed the results of the 2015 elections. Nevertheless, as from the installation of the National Assembly in January 2016, the government of president Maduro has been intent in ignoring the sovereign will of the people, making accusations of disrespect, blocking initiatives and finally, convening the election of a Constituent Assembly, which violates the legitimate powers of the National Assembly.

On the eve of the presidential elections called for Sunday 20 May, the Committee expresses that in Venezuela there does not exist today an independent authority in charge of the electoral process. The date for the elections was set and then changed in a unilateral and arbitrary manner, establishing deadlines that made impossible the nomination of competing candidacies. There are political leaders who are prevented from presenting their candidacies because they are in prison, banned or in exile. There is no free access to the media to carry on campaign activities, while it is evident that on a daily basis the government abuses public resources to ensure its re-election. There are no credible international observation and the system of automatic voting facilities, since the elections for the Constituent Assembly in August 2017, has been questioned by the same enterprise that provides technology support. Therefore, the Committee refuses to recognise any legitimacy of these elections due to the lack of the minimum guarantees for them be considered as free and fair.

Once again, the Committee declares its confidence in the efforts and hopes of the Venezuelan people that will open the way to restore democracy in that country, making possible a future of freedom and dignity for the people of the sister country of Venezuela.

The Committee reiterates its call for the liberation of all the political prisoners; for respect for the National Assembly and all its prerogatives, and for the recognition of the powers and immunities of parliamentarians in the exercise of their duties; for the nomination of independent electoral authorities and for the establishment of an electoral calendar that ensures free, fair and competitive elections as soon as possible, with a real and broad participation of parties and candidates.

The Committee, taking into account the serious economic crisis facing the country and the shortages of food, medicine and basic necessities, calls on the government, the civil society, the international organisations and the international community to immediately mobilise all the humanitarian aid possible to Venezuela.

Our International will not rest in its support for the struggle of the Venezuelan people for freedom and democracy and to whom today we send our full solidarity from Montevideo.

Declaration on José Francisco Peña Gómez

El Comité de la Internacional Socialista para América Latina y el Caribe, reunido en Montevideo los días 17 y 18 de mayo,

En el vigésimo aniversario de su desaparición, rinde un sentido homenaje al recordado líder dominicano José Francisco Peña Gómez, quien al frente de su partido miembro, el Partido Revolucionario Dominicano (PRD), fuera el primer presidente del Comité para América Latina y el Caribe de la Internacional Socialista y un referente global del movimiento socialdemócrata

mundial desde las responsabilidades que asumió en la dirección de esta Internacional Socialista.

Peña Gómez dedicó su vida y su liderazgo a trabajar por el avance y la consolidación de la democracia en su país y a través de todo el continente; por la paz en los tiempos que diversos conflictos golpeaban a Centroamérica; y por la solidaridad que se estableció como el signo de identidad de nuestro movimiento en un continente que sentaba las bases democráticas para los nuevos tiempos.

Por su ejemplo y dedicación, Peña Gómez permanece hoy un referente para todos en este continente y en nuestro movimiento internacional como un líder cuya enseñanza y batalla perduran en los esfuerzos para construir un continente de libertades, de derechos, de más justicia y de mayor solidaridad.

Meeting of the SI Committee for the CIS, Caucasus and Black Sea, St Petersburg, Russia

25-26 May 2018



The Socialist International Committee for the CIS, Caucasus and Black Sea convened in Saint Petersburg, Russia, on 25-26 May 2018, hosted by A Just Russia, its member party in that country, whose leader, Sergey Mironov, addressed the gathering at its opening.

The meeting's agenda focused on three main themes: 'Moving forward a common strategy to strengthen social democracy in the region', 'Overview of the advancement of democracy and its institutions in the region' and 'Our contribution as a movement for peace in resolving and preventing conflicts'. In the lively and rich discussions of the meeting, participants also shared information with their colleagues on the political and social situation in their respective countries, the challenges they faced and the work their party was carrying out.

This meeting, which was chaired by the SI Secretary General, Luis Ayala, had the task of electing the new authorities of the Committee. Alexandra Dobolyi (Hungary MSzp), Araz Alizadeh (Azerbaijan SDPA) and Mikalai Statkevich (Belarus SDP-NH) were unanimously elected as co-chairs. A declaration was issued after the meeting.

Declaration

The Socialist International Committee for the CIS, Caucasus and Black Sea, meeting in Saint Petersburg, Russia on 25-26 May 2018, hosted by the SI member Just Russia Party, discussed the contribution of our movement to the advancement of democracy and its institutions; to resolving and preventing conflicts and strengthening peace in the region; and to moving forward a common strategy for strengthening social democracy in the region.

The Committee took note that social democracy is a growing movement in this region where member parties are playing an increasing role in the political life in different countries, and reaffirmed that the principles and values that inspire our International are recognised and shared by a growing number of citizens, giving way to a greater representation of SI member parties in social movements, parliaments and governments across the region. The Committee noted that the work of our members in favour of fundamental freedoms and rights, and on behalf of the most vulnerable, had contributed to advance democratic goals and consolidate peace. Nevertheless, there remained much to do.

Amongst the issues that Committee members highlighted was the need to guarantee the provision for all citizens in countries of the CIS, Caucasus and Black sea, of open and equal access to the diverse print and electronic media, such as TV, radio, internet and other sources of information, including the official media, opposition and foreign sources of the press. The imposition of barriers, including those sanctioned by legislation, to the free distribution of and access to reliable information were strongly objected to, along with different methods of influencing or affecting the free mass media and those working in it, including prosecution of local and foreign journalists.

The Committee regretted the ongoing armed stand-off in South East Ukraine and called for a peaceful settlement of this conflict in line with the Minsk Agreements and the Normandy format. The Committee appealed to both President Vladimir Putin of Russia and President Petr Poroshenko of Ukraine, to adopt a humanitarian initiative and exchange prisoners: the Ukrainians imprisoned in Russia for the Russians imprisoned in Ukraine, based on the “all for all” principle.

Regarding Belarus, the Committee expressed its concern over the ongoing pressure put upon members and representatives of civil society, on the SI member party Social Democratic Party “Narodnaya Gramada”, the radio-electronic trade union and on other democratic and social organisations in the country. The Committee called on the authorities to immediately stop all politically motivated oppression and to release all political prisoners. The Committee equally appealed to the Belarussian authorities for greater transparency of the electoral processes and vote counting mechanisms in that country.

In regard to the situation in Armenia, the Committee expressed its support for the popular movement and applauded all sides for the peaceful transition of power that had taken place, hoping that the process will continue to proceed based on the Constitution of the country. The Committee supported the SI member party in Armenia, the ARF-Dashnaktsutyun, in its persistent efforts to reform the state government, aimed at establishing a parliamentary system in which the separation of powers among the legislative, executive and judicial

branches of government is complete. In this context, the Committee supported its member party in its struggle against illegal monopolies, corruption, in favour of social justice, and for greater powers to the parliamentary opposition, for a more decentralised system of government and for a more open, transparent and accountable government at all levels.

Concerning the increasing use and application of sanctions as a political tool in the relations between states, the Committee, taking into account the need for increased dialogue and contact between the different political actors internationally to overcome differences, considered that such measures should exclude the travel restrictions imposed on political leaders and members of parliament who normally enjoy immunity in democratic political systems.



The Socialist International congratulates Pedro Sánchez

2 June 2018

The Socialist International congratulates Pedro Sánchez, leader of the SI member party in Spain, PSOE, and a Vice-President of the SI, on becoming President of the Spanish government, taking office on Saturday 2 June, 2018. The world social democratic movement celebrates this news and wishes him and our Spanish comrades every success in these new times for Spain and its people.

5th Anniversary of the death Of Pierre Mauroy

7 June 2018

On 7 June, the fifth anniversary of the passing of Pierre Mauroy, former President of the Socialist International, the SI Secretary General joined former close collaborators of Pierre Mauroy in the cemetery of Lille to lay a wreath and pay respects on behalf of the SI. A former Mayor of Lille and Prime Minister of France, Pierre Mauroy served as Socialist International President from 1992 to 1999.





SI welcomes agreement signed yesterday by Greece and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

18 June 2018

The parties belonging to the socialist family are committed to peace and cooperation among the peoples and the countries of the Balkans.

The parties of democratic socialism have a decisive role to play in these turbulent times. We oppose extreme right wing and demagogic forces that are bent on undermining democratic achievements and pluralistic societies. We oppose their authoritarian rhetoric and actions which threaten the basic democratic guarantees for every citizen, for their rights and the free expression of citizens' voices. We oppose their attempts to divide through extreme nationalism, xenophobia and hate speech.

The peaceful resolution of pending conflicts through mutually agreed solutions is a one way street if we want to establish stability, security, rule of law and sustainable growth in the Balkan region.

For these reasons we have followed the spirit and the principles of the Agenda for the Western Balkans adopted at the European Council in Thessaloniki in 2003 which gave an effective perspective for the accession of the countries of that region to the EU once the relevant criteria are met.

In this spirit, we welcome the decision of Athens and Skopje to end the pending issue of the constitutional name of Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia through an agreement reached under the auspices of the United Nations.

Despite whatever difficulties, this breakthrough will extensively enhance regional and citizens cooperation and open up new possibilities for the development of infrastructure, innovative investment, sustainable development, trade and tourism in a time of economic crisis.

In this context,

We wish the government of Zoran Zaev success in completing the necessary steps that will enable the implementation of this agreement.

We encourage all progressive political forces to stand in solidarity with this effort for growth and stability in the Balkan region.

We call on the progressive citizens of both countries to actively fight divisive rhetoric and polarization.

This moment signals a major chance for a secure and peaceful future for all. This opportunity should not be missed.

Socialist International Secretary General in Angola

20 June 2018



Socialist International highlights Angola's role in the Great Lakes
Angola Press Agency, June 19, 2018

The recognition was made by the Secretary General of the SI, Luis Ayala, at the end of an audience granted by the Vice President of the MPLA, João Lourenço. Speaking to the press at the end of the hearing, the official said that Angola works for freedom, democracy, human rights, peace and conflict resolution, strengthening democratic processes.



Meeting of the SI Council at the United Nations in Geneva

26-27 June 2018



The Council of the Socialist International met at the United Nations in Geneva (UNOG) on 26-27 June 2018 in order to discuss social democratic responses to issues of the utmost global significance. The agenda included three main themes: 'The contribution of social democracy to the resolution of conflicts and to international peace and security', 'Overcoming challenges to democracy around the world to secure freedoms and rights for all', and 'Responding with our values and principles to migration globally and to the current plight of refugees'.

The Council was opened by SI Secretary General Luis Ayala, who underlined that the agenda was focused on themes that were a key priority for socialists and social democrats. He outlined that multilateralism was a core value of the SI and an indispensable tool for resolving conflicts. Social democratic values had also been central to the establishment and strengthening of democracy in many countries, and he urged action to combat the rise of populism, nationalism and authoritarianism, which was threatening the advances of previous years. He also noted that migrants were more and more demonised despite the positive role of migration in human prosperity, regretting the lack of solidarity from the richest countries on this issue.

Michael Møller, United Nations Under-Secretary-General and Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva, greeted all participants, saying it was a great privilege and pleasure to welcome them to the Palais des Nations. He reflected on the state of the world at a time when it was fashionable to diagnose a demise of the global order, outlining the challenge of defending and reinvigorating multilateralism. Throughout his address, the Director-General highlighted the importance and potential of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as an action plan that everyone could get behind. He considered that answers to the challenges of the day began with unity and solidarity, core values of the SI that were shared by the United Nations.

In his opening speech, the SI President George Papandreou described the sense of urgency within the movement, confronted with many injustices in societies, deep inequalities in the global economy, the growing concentration of power and wealth and facing the monstrosity of

those who used fear and violence to gain power and achieve their goals. He reflected that multilateralism and cooperation were being undermined by the new US administration, making space for anti-solidarity movements and extreme nationalism. The role of social democracy was to stand up to the rise of the far right, showing that there was a different way and he called on delegates to infuse their politics with passion and imagination to this end.

Under the first main theme, contributions were heard from a number of members of the SI Presidium, and delegates directly involved in on-going processes of conflict resolution. These exchanges underlined the need for a rules-based international order, and for efforts to build confidence between countries where a risk of conflict existed. A number of the declarations later adopted at the close of the meeting reflected these discussions on international peace and security. These included a declaration on conflict resolution in Africa, a declaration on the Palestinian Question, a declaration on the Kurdish people, and a declaration on the Korean Peninsula.

The second main theme of the Council was introduced by former president of Chile Ricardo Lagos, who gave a special address on challenges to democracy. He considered in particular that current trends were pointing to a world without any global order in which it would become difficult for democracy to prevail, in particular as populism grew in strength in countries previously known for their strong democratic values. One answer proposed was to make democracy a more horizontal system and an instrument of change as a way to restore confidence in institutions. Lagos noted that these challenges were identical in the developed and developing world, and that above all, democrats everywhere needed to live up to the deeds of their ancestors and be brave. These sentiments were echoed during further interventions on democracy made by delegates with wide-ranging experiences on the subject, from countries where democracy was well-established to those where it is almost completely absent. A declaration on overcoming challenges to democracy around the world was later adopted.

Omar Barboza, President of the Venezuelan Parliament (National Assembly), who was specially invited to the Council to address the critical situation in his country, explained how millions had left Venezuela due to a humanitarian crisis caused by corruption, repression, censorship and a lack of respect for human rights, and called for new, free presidential elections with the presence of impartial international observers. The Council echoed these calls in a resolution on Venezuela. The Council further articulated a position on the situation with regard to democracy and human rights in specific countries, adopting a declaration on Nicaragua and a resolution on Djibouti. A special declaration of recognition for the achievements of President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita of Mali and of support as he stands for re-election in July 2018, was adopted.

Interventions on the third theme, "Responding with our values and principles to migration globally and to the current plight of refugees," included emotive and heartfelt expressions, as successive delegates underlined their support for people on the move in the world today. There was recognition among all that migration has played a vitally important historical role in the development and prosperity of humanity, and continues to be a positive phenomenon. Many speakers touched on the way that language was used to divide migrants into different categories with implicit hierarchies, such as refugee or economic migrant, immigrant or ex-pat. The Council would later adopt a declaration on global migration and the plight of refugees, underlining the fundamental and inalienable human rights of all migrants and the central and positive role of migration in human history.

A report was delivered by the chair of the Ethics Committee, Arianne Fontenelle (PS, Belgium), on the work of the committee. There were currently 41 applications for membership under examination. The Council approved the proposals of the committee to upgrade to full

membership the MLPC of Central African Republic and to upgrade from observer to consultative status the Komala Party of Iranian Kurdistan. It agreed to admit the Rasanbleman party of Haiti and the Social Democratic Party of Kyrgyzstan as new full member parties; the PPSF of Palestine and the CPP of Ghana as consultative parties; and the SDPS of Serbia and MSD of Kosovo as observer members. Regarding adherence to the SI's Ethical Charter, the Council decided that the Ethics Committee would undertake an investigation of compliance by the Fusion of Social Democrats (FSDH, Haiti), and that in the case of the member party in Benin, the chair of the Africa Committee would voluntarily suspend his activities and the next meeting of the regional committee should resolve the question of the chair.

Maurice Poler (AD, Venezuela), delivered his report as co-chair of the Finance and Administration Committee, reminding member parties of the need to meet their financial obligations to the SI, both to maintain their status and voting rights within the organisation and in order that the SI could continue to deliver a full programme of activities and meet the ambition of its members.

It was agreed that the final composition of the SI Committee on Gender Equality will be confirmed on the occasion of the annual meeting of the SI Presidium to take place at the headquarters of the United Nations in New York in September this year during the high level segment of the General Assembly.

Concluding the Council's discussions, the SI Secretary General touched on remarks made during the sessions in reference to the SI being the legitimate organisation of the social democrats. He highlighted that the SI held its legitimacy as long as it was consistent with the values and principles that identify our movement, and as long as it was democratically self-governed and financially self-sustained by its members, guaranteeing its autonomy and integrity. The Council, he said, had offered us a route to follow and a mission to move forward our conclusions.

Declarations and resolutions, Meeting of the SI Council in Geneva 26-27 June 2018

Declaration on overcoming challenges to democracy around the world

The Socialist International Council, meeting at the United Nations in Geneva, considered the historical role played by socialist and social democratic parties in the establishment, consolidation and defence of democracy. For most of the last half-century, unprecedented advances have been made, with member parties of the Socialist International among the primary architects of democracy in their respective countries. However, in the last decade the threat of a regression in democratic rights has emerged, and the Council considered the emerging and enduring challenges to democracy, and how they might be overcome.

The Council:

Reiterates that democracy is the foundation of a free, just and prosperous society, and that the members of the SI, as social democratic political parties, are defined by their fundamental commitment to democracy and its advancement.

Recognises that as social democrats we cannot take democracy for granted in any of our countries, in particular where democratic rights were acquired relatively recently. It is vital to guard against a regression to previous undemocratic systems and practices and to counter the threat posed by anti-democratic forces.

Considers that the current wave of populism that has emerged around the world, in particular right-wing populism, represents a major danger to the hard-won freedoms that SI member parties hold dear.

Recognises that a significant source of the disillusionment that has contributed to the rise of populism is rooted in an ineffective and unjust response to the global financial crisis that began a decade ago. This relates in particular to austerity policies, the effects of which are still being felt and have had most impact on those who bore least responsibility for the crisis.

Calls for coordinated international action to address the new threats posed to democracy by unaccountable corporations that are able to exercise power and influence over the electoral process and by the rapid spread of influential misinformation on social media.

Underlines the importance of cooperation and solidarity across international borders in offering support to those struggling to establish, consolidate and defend democracy. In this regards the collective strength of the Socialist International can be exercised to great effect, making use of our global network of activists, party members and elected representatives to mobilise in defence of democratic rights and freedoms.

Declaration on global migration and the plight of refugees

The SI Council considers that migration has played a central and positive role throughout human history, as our ancestors have moved to different regions of the planet in pursuit of opportunity, freedom and a better quality of life. These are people who have contributed to the development and advancement of their places of arrival through their talents and endeavours, shaping the countries of the world as we know them today.

The Council rejects attempts to portray migration in the 21st century as a negative phenomenon, and the associated demonization of those who move across national borders. Social democratic parties oppose the anti-immigration rhetoric of the populist right, which merely creates scapegoats rather than offering solutions to the realities of the day.

The commitments made by the SI Council on migration are grounded in the SI Charter for the Rights of Migrants, adopted by the Council at the United Nations in New York in 2015. This document, which all SI member parties are committed to uphold, underlines the fundamental human rights of all migrants, based on respect for human life and basic liberties.

The Council considered current trends in global migration:

The death of thousands of migrants in the Mediterranean Sea in recent years as they attempt to cross into Europe is a human catastrophe on a devastating scale, and a source of great shame for humanity. At a time when solidarity, compassion and assistance to fellow inhabitants of this planet are required, anti-migrant rhetoric from populist parties have created a situation in which more concern has been shown for keeping migrants out than human life. In this regard, the Council is extremely concerned by the position recently adopted by the governments of Italy and Malta in turning away ships requiring assistance having rescued people from the waters of the Mediterranean. The Council is also concerned about the lack of coordinated-policy response at the European level, where the populist and nationalistic forces are imposing their migration policies characterized by border closings and xenophobia. These movements of people require a human response, rather than an attempt to make the outer borders of Europe impenetrable, and the Council applauds actions of the Spanish socialist government of Pedro Sánchez, SI Vice-President, which has given these people a safe haven.

The emergence last year of clear evidence of the selling of humans as slaves in Libya was a shocking and abhorrent demonstration of complete disregard for the human rights of migrants who had in many cases been taken unwittingly into the country by human traffickers under

false pretences. Special attention to women and children who are often victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation. Migrants are among the most vulnerable in society and are particularly prone to exploitation and mistreatment. In this context it is a positive step for the defence of human rights that the UN has recently imposed sanctions for people on six Libyans responsible for a transnational smuggling network and brutal treatment of migrants.

Populist parties have successfully exploited the issue of migration in order to win electoral success, and it is vital for social democratic parties to respond. All political parties must listen to legitimate concerns of the electorate, but social democrats have a moral and political obligation to defend the

human rights of migrants and the contribution they make to their country of arrival. Those who seek to blame migration for economic difficulties, a lack of social cohesion, unemployment and other problems in society do so because they do not want to look for solutions but only to stop migrations. In contrast, seeking appropriate, just and sustainable solutions to the consequences of global migration flows are at the core of social democracy.

It is equally vital to counter misinformation, in particular the narrative that the developed world is under siege from mass migration. Approximately 85% of global refugees are hosted by developing countries, which themselves are in many cases facing severe economic and societal challenges. Nowhere is this more true than in Africa, which hosts more refugees than any other region of the world yet is often portrayed as the source of the global refugee crisis.

The Council condemns the policy of separating predominantly Latin American migrant children from their parents and their placement in detention facilities instituted by the current US administration. Such treatment is fundamentally cruel and a clear violation of the human rights of these vulnerable children, many of them extremely young and at risk of severe trauma as a result.

The Council recalls its previous declarations on the Rohingya people and urges continued attention to the plight of those forced to flee Myanmar and seek refuge in neighbouring Bangladesh. It reiterates its calls for an end to persecution and human rights violations against the Rohingya, underlines the right of all Rohingya to be able to return to their homes with guarantees of security and urges the international community to maintain pressure on the leadership and government of Myanmar.

The number of forcibly displaced people in the world today is greater than at any stage since the Second World War. This includes both cross-border refugees and internally displaced persons, and is an indication of the wider impact of conflict, terrorism and climate change on vulnerable populations. The Council underlines that no action to resolve the global refugee crisis can succeed without also addressing the underlying causes of the flows of people across international borders. This will require concerted action on conflict resolution, peace-building, sustainable development, democratisation and tackling climate change. These are the defining challenges of this era, and cannot be resolved by any one country alone. At the heart of responses to global migration and the plight of refugees is therefore the principle of multilateralism.

Migration is a question that we must address with humanity and with the courage of our convictions as socialists, in the name of solidarity, respect and social justice. We cannot accept simplistic categories of legal (asylum seekers, refugees, etc.) versus illegal migrants (all the others, economic, environmental), allowing the populists to define who is in and who is out. We must restore legal channels of legal migration also for non-forcibly displaced people. We must establish stable relations with the countries of origin and transit for a joint management of the migration flows, helping them in their development processes and building democratic institutions that are respectful of human rights.

Declaration on conflict resolution in Africa

The Council of the Socialist International, meeting at the United Nations in Geneva on 26-27 June 2018, discussed the contribution of social democracy to the resolution of conflicts and to international peace and security.

Conflicts in the world destroy lives, impede development and cause the forced displacement of civilian populations. The resolution of conflicts and push for peace must therefore remain fundamental social democratic principles, which the SI and its member parties seek to advance at all times. Peace is of course a prerequisite for personal security, development and a high standard of living.

In this context, the Council considered the vital work of conflict resolution in Africa, a continent where the SI has a long history of working for peace and security. It recognised that several SI member parties are actively engaged in a number of peace building and conflict resolution efforts.

The SI has consistently encouraged regional cooperation in the Sahel to combat terrorism and reinforce security, and the Council reiterates the support of the SI for the G5 Sahel task force. Though the terrorist threat remains in the Sahel, thanks to coordinated action by regional governments it has been contained.

With respect to Western Sahara, the Council expresses its support for the Secretary-General of the United Nations and his newly appointed Personal Envoy in their efforts to achieve a political, peaceful, fair and lasting solution, mutually acceptable for both sides in the conflict, in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions. This process should lead to face to face negotiations of the parties.

The Council recognises the determined and persistent efforts in the region of the Great Lakes by countries of that region committed to peace. The International Conference for the Great Lakes Region has been an important forum for working towards a durable and negotiated solution that will bring peace and stability to the DR Congo, Central African Republic, Burundi and Sudan, where terrorist groups and rebels have left a trail of destruction and death.

The SI is following with interest the evolution of the situation in Libya and expresses its support to the actions of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and his deputy, for a political solution involving all Libyans and starting with the organisation of elections in order to establish legal institutions.

The SI is following with great attention the dramatic and worrying evolution of the crisis which is affecting the Anglophone populations of the north-west and south-west of Cameroon and reiterates its exhortation to President Paul Biya to urgently find appropriate solutions to put an end to this dangerous crisis before the situation deteriorates in the whole country.

Declaration on the Palestinian Question

The Council of the Socialist International, meeting in United Nations, in Geneva, on 26-27 June 2018, held discussions on the theme of international peace and security and reflected on the prospects for peace in the Middle East, - Recalling its previous declarations of the SI, in particular the SI Councils in New York in June 2010, in Istanbul in November 2013, in Geneva in December 2014, in New York in July 2015, and in Geneva in July 2016:

The Council:

Reaffirms the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, including the right to their independent State of Palestine on the June 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital, and reaffirms its commitment, in accordance with international law, to bringing a complete end to

the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian state that started in 1967 in order to achieve the two-state solution, as two sovereign and democratic states for all their citizens and a just solution to the issue of Palestinian refugees on the basis of the UN resolution 194;

After more than 25 years of failing to achieve peace through the bilateral peace process, we believe that the time has come for the international community to (collectively) meet its responsibility under international law to bring an end to the occupation of the Palestinian State and all impediments to the exercise by the Palestinian people of their right to self-determination;

Recalling our 2011 Athens Council declaration on the Middle East, whereby we called for the recognition of the State of Palestine, the SI members reaffirm their commitment to:

1. Support the immediate unconditional recognition of the State of Palestine on the borders of the 4th of June 1967 with East Jerusalem as its capital.
2. Support a greater international role through an international conference that will include various international actors from different regions in order to push for a just and lasting peace based on international law for Israel and Palestine, including complete ending the occupation that began in 1967;
3. Support a total end of all settlement activities including in East Jerusalem, the immediate end of destruction of homes and the deportation of Palestinians and to end all forms of racial discrimination and apartheid;
4. Encourage the non-violent approach at all levels and by all parties and demand the immediate cessation of all forms of violence by the Israeli occupying power and settlers against the Palestinian non-violent resistance;
5. Demand the immediate release of all the Palestinian prisoners especially the elected members of the Palestinian legislative council, minors and administrative detainees;
6. Since the SI's last statement on April 2018, the number of Palestinian civilians attacked by Israeli Occupation Forces has risen sharply with the killing of over 130 unarmed Palestinians and injuring of over 6,000 including children, journalists, first aid paramedics, women and men. The Council strongly condemns the illegal blockade of the Gaza Strip by Israel, as well as the use of lethal weapons by Israeli military forces against peaceful non-violent protesters, and call the Israeli Government to immediately lift the siege on the Gaza Strip and allow free the movement of the people. The SI affirms its support to the United Nations General Assembly resolution (A/ES-10/L.23) that calls for "guaranteeing the safety and protection of the Palestinian civilian population in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in the Gaza Strip".
7. Calls all governments and civil society organizations to activate boycott, divestment and sanctions against the Israeli occupation, all the occupation institutions, and the illegal Israeli settlements including the total embargo on all forms of military trade and cooperation with Israel as long as it continues its policies of occupation and apartheid against the Palestinian people.
8. The SI Council further calls on the US administration to reconsider its positions that are favouring Israel, including moving their embassy to Jerusalem. We regret the US decision to withdraw from the Human Rights Council, as it did previously from the Paris Agreement on climate change and UNESCO.
9. The SI Council would like to reiterate its solidarity with the progressive forces in Israel and Palestine, including human rights defenders and civil society organizations that have been victims of a vicious campaign by the Israeli government. At the same time, the Council express its solidarity with the Palestinian citizens in Israel that continues to

live under a system of institutionalized discrimination and strongly condemn the approval of racist laws, including the Citizenship Law.

Declaration on the Kurdish people

The SI Council considers that the Iranian regime is able to easily escape the consequences of its actions, knowing that the nuclear programme overshadows other topics such as solidarity and human rights. We expect the International community not to help the Iranian regime to become even more powerful in suppressing opposition.

Right now the Iranian people reached a point where they cannot tolerate poverty, inflation and corruption any longer and are in the streets asking for the Iranian regime to pay attention to the Iranian people instead of interfering in Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, Yemen and providing economic support to them instead of taking care of its own people. The SI offers its support to the people of Iran in general and Kurdish people in particular in their struggle for democracy and human rights.

In Iraqi Kurdistan, the SI supports the implementation of the Iraqi Constitution and resolving all the outstanding issues between the federal government and the Kurdistan Regional government in a peaceful manner. We call upon the Iraqi political parties and the future new federal government to make arrangements which reflect a true participation of the Kurds in the new government based on a partnership, consensus and balance. We call upon both governments in Baghdad and Erbil to stabilise the situation in the disputed territories and allow a joint administration in order to prevent ISIS and similar groups from exploiting the post referendum tensions in the areas for their own advantage and to protect the rights of the Kurdish people and other ethnic and religious minorities in these areas.

We send our congratulations to the People's Democratic Party (HDP) which recently gained major votes in the elections in Turkey. We demand the immediate release of the president of the HDP, Selahattin Demirtas and of all the political prisoners that are illegally detained in Turkish prisons.

The Turkish government should allow the political dialogue to be resumed and needs to return to the process of finding a peaceful solution to the Kurdish question.

In Syria, the Socialist International supports a fair solution for the Kurdish people, so as to guarantee the unity and sovereignty of Syria within the framework of decentralized governance, according to the model of democratic federalism.

As far as Afrin is concerned, we support the safe, stable and dignified return of the people of Afrin, under international supervision and the end of the Turkish occupation in the region.

In line with the commitment of the SI to the cause of the Kurdish people, the Council decides to re- establish the SI Committee on the Kurdish Question.

Declaration on Nicaragua

Original Spanish

In view of the latest violent events in Nicaragua and the growing polarisation of the social, political and entrepreneurial forces in the country, the member parties of the Socialist International:

- strongly condemn the deaths of more than 212 people, a responsibility of the State of Nicaragua due to the excessive use of force by the police, vigilante groups and third party armed groups, as established by the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights, IACHR, in their report dated 21 June 2018;

- take note of the efforts made by the Government of Nicaragua, the FSLN, and all parties involved in the National Dialogue, urging them to redouble their efforts to achieve a permanent and lasting negotiated solution as soon as possible, away from violence, ensuring the safety of citizens and full justice, which are essential for social stability and the economic progress of the whole society;
- encourages the bringing to fruition of what has already been agreed by the parties involved, with an official invitation of the Government of Nicaragua to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and to the European Union to accompany the efforts of the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights (HRIC), of the OAS and its commissions of assistance, to civil society, and a commission of experts, to investigate the events that have taken place in the country since 18th April;
- urge the Verification and Security Commission that has created the Dialogue to carry out its functions to achieve the cessation of all forms of violence and threats wherever they come from in the national territory and an implementation plan as soon as possible for the removal of the tanks and to enhance the maintaining of an environment of peace and security; and
- encourage compliance with the agreements of the National Dialogue to invite the Secretary General of the Organization of American States (OAS), Luis Almagro, to come to the country and explain in plenary session the scope and contents of the agreements on electoral and institutional matters that have been signed and are being put into effect with the Government of Nicaragua.

Declaration on the Korean Peninsula

Recalling the statement issued by the SI from the UN Headquarters in New York in September 2017 and the declaration on North Korea of the SI Council in Barcelona in November 2017, the Council took note of the latest developments in relation to the situation on the Korean peninsula.

In line with the fundamental commitment of the SI to peace and dialogue, the Council underlined the necessity of seeking a political solution to the tensions.

The Council expresses its full support for the peace diplomacy policy pursued by the Social Democratic Party of Japan, rooted in the unique situation of Japan as the only country that has suffered the terrible destruction of nuclear weapons. Japan should proactively engage as the guarantor of denuclearisation of the Korean peninsula, working for the stability and peace of northeast Asia.

The possession of nuclear weapons by North Korea cannot be recognised in the interests of regional peace and security. The Council supports initiatives to create a nuclear weapon-free zone in northeast Asia, which would encompass Japan, North Korea, South Korea and Mongolia. The verifiable denuclearisation of the Korean peninsula in a peaceful manner is a prerequisite for lasting peace and stability in northeast Asia, and the Council welcomes recent steps towards reconciliation between North and South Korea.

There is now the opportunity to bring an end to the Cold War structures that have persisted in East Asia, by normalising relationships of both the United States and Japan with North Korea. This improvement in relationships could in turn bring about the implementation of economic assistance and a future in which the whole of the Korean peninsula enjoys peace and prosperity built on mutual trust and confidence.

Declaration on Mali

The SI Council recognised the progress made in Mali during the five-year term of President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita, recalling that he was elected at a time when the country was in a multi-dimensional crisis. This had seen the Malian state collapse following an invasion of the northern regions by rebel and jihadist forces, and a military coup d'état.

Over the last five years, the government of Mali has addressed the priorities of peace and reconciliation by concluding a treaty with armed rebel groups, increased the strength of security forces in the fight against terrorism, revived the economy, promoted gender equality and the participation of women in society, increased the living conditions of Malians, and reduced poverty.

The SI Council expresses its wholehearted support for President Keita as he stands for re-election on 29 July 2018. The Council has full confidence in the measures put in place by the Malian government to ensure the transparency and credibility of the electoral process, including the adoption of a new electoral law in April with the support of both the majority and the opposition.

Resolution on Venezuela

Original: Spanish

The Socialist International, at its Council meeting held on 26-27 June 2018 at the United Nations in Geneva, observes with concern the conflict of powers in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, where the Executive Power attempts by illegal means and contrary to the Constitution to curb the attributions of the National Assembly which was democratically elected by the Venezuelan people and is representative of the peoples' sovereignty.

Once again, the Socialist International extends its solidarity to the Venezuelan people in their struggle to recover the effective validity of democracy in that country.

The Socialist International shares and supports the conclusions reached by the Council of the European Union regarding the electoral process that took place in Venezuela on 20 May 2018, expressing that "the election and the results lack credibility because the electoral process did not grant the necessary guarantees for the holding of integral and democratic elections". The SI also shares the appeal made by the 28 states of the European Union for new presidential elections to be held in accordance with internationally recognized democratic norms and the Venezuelan constitutional order.

The International emphatically rejects the massive violation of human rights in Venezuela, the lack of separation of public powers, the politically motivated persecutions in the country and the existence of more than 400 political prisoners, including the leader of a member party of our organization, Leopoldo López.

Finally, the SI reiterates its recognition of the Venezuelan National Assembly as the legitimate representative of the country's popular sovereignty elected by a great majority on 6 December 2015, and whose mandate is in force until the last day of the year 2020.

Resolution of support for democracy and for the MRD in Djibouti

Original: French

The members of the Socialist International, gathered at the United Nations in Geneva on 26- 27 June 2018 for a meeting of the SI Council, follow with great concern the situation in Djibouti, the denial of democracy, repeated violations of human rights and bad governance which have persisted in the country since its independence in 1977.

The government has still not implemented the political agreement signed with the opposition on 30 December 2014 following the post-electoral crisis of February 2013. Consequently, the parliamentary elections held on 23 February 2018 were neither free nor democratic and were therefore boycotted by the credible opposition.

Similarly, the main opposition party in Djibouti, the MRD, is a victim of denial of justice and had its existence threatened, hence the complaint it filed on 21 November 2017 with the United Nations Human Rights Committee in Geneva.

SI cannot remain indifferent to this situation which, if left unresolved, could end up in a serious crisis and worsen instability and insecurity in Horn of Africa and on the banks of the Red Sea.

Consequently, the SI urges President Ismael Omar Guelleh to:

- end repression, human rights violations and denial of democracy,
- implement the political agreement of the 30 December 2014 and to thereby put in place the democratic reforms such as the creation of an egalitarian Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI) and the implementation of a status for the opposition, conditions that are necessary for the holding of free and fair elections,
- restore the rights and legality of the MRD and to stop the arbitrary refusal and legality of opposition parties and civil society organisations such as the Djiboutian League for human rights (LDDH).

Meeting of the Council of Socialist International Women

28 June 2018

Secretary General of the Socialist International, Luis Ayala, participating at the meeting of the Council of the Socialist International Women in Geneva.



SI Secretary General, Luis Ayala, with Ouafa Hajji, President of the SIW

SI welcomes peace agreement between Eritrea and Ethiopia

10 July 2018

The Socialist International warmly welcomes the signing of a peace agreement by Eritrea's President Isaias Afewerki and Ethiopia's Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, bringing to an end the state of war between the two countries that has persisted for two decades. Although a ceasefire had previously been reached, the border dispute at the centre of the conflict had been unresolved until Prime Minister Ahmed announced in early June that Ethiopia would fully accept the terms of the comprehensive peace agreement of 2000. The war, which lasted two years between 1998 and 2000, claimed 80,000 lives.

This accord will have a profound and positive effect on the lives of the people of both Eritrea and Ethiopia, a process which has already begun with the resumption of telephone communications between the two countries for the first time since 1998. Both governments have also expressed their desire to open "a new era of peace and friendship", with the opening of embassies, development of ports and resumption of flights between the neighbouring countries.

Choosing diplomacy, compromise and reconciliation is never straightforward, but this historic joint commitment to a shared future means that both countries will be able to enjoy the benefits of enhanced political, economic, social, cultural and security cooperation. As the Socialist International has outlined on many occasions, without peace there can be no development, no prosperity, and the objectives of democracy and social justice demanded by people all over the world cannot be achieved.

Eritrea and Ethiopia have shown that with effective leadership and a common will, peace is always within reach, achieving a great success for their two nations that will also benefit the Horn of Africa region and the continent as a whole. This positive example of conflict resolution could become a catalyst for wider peace building efforts, and the SI will continue to work with its member parties and others to promote peace and conflict resolution, which are fundamental social democratic principles and objectives.

SI Secretary General in Mali for Presidential elections

28 July 2018



The Secretary General of the Socialist International, Luis Ayala, was present in Mali for the closing of the election campaign, and to witness the voting process on the election day itself. At the close of the campaign on Saturday 28 July, the SG participated in a meeting of leaders from different regions, including all the leaders of the political parties which make up the "Ensemble pour le Mali", which supports the candidacy of Ibrahim Boubacar Keita (IBK) for President of Mali. Addressing the gathering, the SI Secretary General underlined the significance of the election of IBK resulting from a large

mobilisation of the people of Mali to consolidate democracy, secure peace, and to continue advancing the commitment of the SI members in Mali for justice and solidarity.



Bokary Treta, President of the RPM and head of the election campaign, with the SI Secretary General and party leaders

Congratulations to the President of Mali

17 August 2018



The Socialist International warmly congratulates H.E. Ibrahim Boubacar Keita on his re-election as the President of Mali.

During his first mandate, President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita implemented an agenda to strengthen democracy, ensure peace and improve the living conditions of the citizens of Mali. When he assumed the presidency, the country was suffering a grave crisis following rebel insurgency in the northern regions and invasion by foreign jihadist forces, as well as the consequences of an earlier

military coup. In the five years of his tenure, his government has succeeded in obtaining substantial advances in its priority of achieving peace and reconciliation by concluding a treaty with rebel groups, in increasing the strength of the security forces in the fight against terrorism, in reviving the economy, in promoting gender equality and the participation of women in society, in improving the living conditions of its inhabitants, and in reducing poverty.

The elections were carried out successfully, despite security challenges, as observed by different international delegations and by the SI Secretary General who was present in Mali in

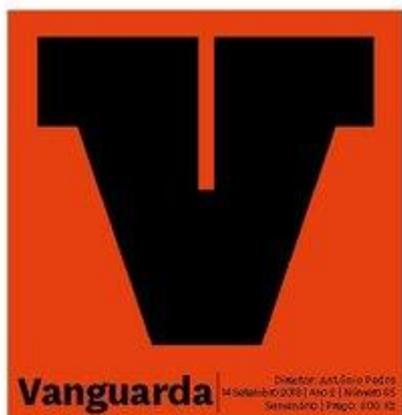
the run-up to the elections and during the first round of the vote, and who defined them as a great mobilisation of the people of Mali in favour of democracy and peace.

The SI also expresses its recognition of the political forces that supported the electoral campaign of President Keita, the RPM, an SI member party, under the leadership of Bokary Treta, a Vice-President of the International, and the other forces which made up the alliance 'Together for Mali', which included the ADEMA-PASJ, also an SI member party.

The Socialist International remains firm in its commitment to continue to work together with President Keita and its members in Mali in their objective to advance in the task of securing peace in the northern regions of the country and to continue on the path initiated during his first term in office to strengthen democracy and to improve the quality of life of all the inhabitants of Mali.

SI Secretary General in Angola for the 6th extraordinary congress of the MPLA

8 September 2018



Ramin Hossein Panahi

10 September 2018



The Socialist International is deeply saddened to learn of reports emanating from the Iranian Public Prosecutor's Office that Ramin Hossein Panahi, who had been sentenced to death for his alleged membership of Komala, was executed by the Iranian regime on 7 September, despite numerous appeals by the international community and human rights organisations. The SI had drawn attention to the plight of Panahi and supported the campaign of the Komala KPIK, an

SI member party, for his release. It is reported that Panahi was executed along with two other prisoners, Zaniar and Loghman Moradi, following a flawed trial. The SI denounces these acts in the strongest terms and sends its heartfelt condolences to the families of the victims and to the members of the KPIK.

SI condemns Iran's missile attack against Iranian Kurds in Iraq

10 September 2018

The Socialist International expresses its outrage and condemns the missile attack carried out by the Islamic Republic of Iran over the weekend against the headquarters of two SI Iranian member parties, the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP-Iran) and the Democratic Party of Iranian Kurdistan (PDKI), located in Northern Iraq.

The headquarters of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP-Iran) was deliberately targeted while its central committee was in session with senior leaders, resulting in the tragic deaths of 16 of its members and the injury of close to 50. The Iranian regime also targeted the headquarters of the Democratic Party of Iranian Kurdistan (PDKI) and nearby refugee camps in Koya. The Socialist International conveys its deepest sympathy and condolences to the family and comrades of those killed in the attack, and its solidarity with those injured.

This targeted onslaught against the Iranian Kurds over the weekend began with news of the execution of three Kurdish political prisoners by the Iranian regime, including Ramin Hossein Panahi of the SI member Komala Party of Iranian Kurdistan (KPIK), whose plight the SI had previously drawn attention to and who was subject of numerous appeals by the international community and human rights organisations.

The Islamic Republic of Iran has violated the national sovereignty of a neighbouring country, targeted innocent civilians and contravened international law. The Socialist International calls on the entire international community to unequivocally denounce these unacceptable acts.

Meeting of the SI Presidium and Heads of State & Government, United Nations, New York

27 September 2018



The Presidium of the Socialist International held its annual meeting in conjunction with the high-level segment of the UN General Assembly at the United Nations headquarters in New York on 27 September 2018. The members of the Presidium, along with invited heads of state and government and a number of ministers from SI member parties, focused their exchanges on the key issues for the global social democratic movement at the present time. The agenda for the meeting included the current international situation and global challenges that arise for the social democratic movement; emphases and priorities to ensure that the multilateral system effectively secures peace and sustainability and respect for freedoms and rights for all; and how to reinforce the foundations of our global society in these troubled times.

The SI President George Papandreou, opening the meeting, expressed concern over attacks on the multilateral system by proponents of radical nationalism around the world. While such forces were more concerned with looking for scapegoats than coming up with solutions, social democrats needed to give their alternative view, in a strong endorsement of the multilateral actions needed to deal with climate change, to achieve the SDGs and to increase fairness in the world. Luis Ayala, SI Secretary General, said that multilateralism had been central to the vision of our movement to gain and maintain peace, and therefore the SI has been among the strongest supporters of the UN. Nationalism and populism were a great challenge, both for the UN, which had today an ever more important role in the world, and for the members of the SI who, with their values and principles of freedoms, rights and social justice, had been the architects of new democracies in different parts of the world.

The contributions made by the heads of state and government present were a ringing endorsement of the importance of multilateralism in the face of the challenges faced by the whole planet, and a firm rejection of nationalism and isolationism. President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita (Mali) and President Mahamadou Issoufou (Niger) both reflected on the challenges faced by their neighbouring countries and the Sahel region, and the need for a common front against terrorism and a more peaceful world. The resolution of conflicts and securing peace remain

vital tasks that can only be achieved through international cooperation, a fact that was raised by Prime Minister Pavel Filip (Moldova) in relation to his party's desire to secure peace in a challenging neighbourhood.

Multilateralism was also highlighted as a vital tool in the context of global development, and Prime Minister Ukhnaagiin Khürelsükh (Mongolia) stressed the importance of the SDGs and the right to development in a sustainable way, noting the sustainable 2030 vision of his government. The value of economic cooperation in ensuring prosperity and welfare for the people of the world was underlined by Prime Minister Duško Marković (Montenegro), who also reflected on the electoral success of his party based on the values it shared with the SI.

The President of the Spanish Government, Pedro Sánchez, outlined how his new government embodied the common values and principles of the SI, leading the way among OECD countries on gender equality, making green government a priority and addressing the migration crisis with a focus on human rights. He participated in exchanges with SI vice-presidents on issues of concern, giving his perspective on migratory policy and the plight of unaccompanied minors, the crisis in Venezuela, the challenges posed by the current US administration and prospects for forthcoming European elections.

The Presidium also discussed the future work of the International, having received a mandate from the previous Council to determine the final composition of the newly established SI Committee on Gender Equality. The Presidium welcomed and endorsed the names put forward by the SI President, agreed in coordination with the SI Secretary General and the SIW President, respecting the crucial principles of regional balance and equal gender representation. The first meeting of the committee would be held at the time of the next SI Council meeting. The SI Secretary General later reported to the Presidium that he had received a number of offers to host the forthcoming Council meetings, with the issue of timing and the order in which these meetings would be held to be resolved in the coming weeks. He noted that it was very positive news that the next four Councils could be held in different continents: Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America.

Following the exchanges and concerns raised by a number of vice-presidents on particularly pressing issues, the Presidium approved the release of statements on Venezuela, on Nicaragua, on the Middle East and on Libya.

The heads of state and government present for the meeting were President of Mali Ibrahim Boubacar Keita, President of Niger Mahamadou Issoufou, Prime Minister of Moldova Pavel Filip, Prime Minister of Mongolia Ukhnaagiin Khürelsükh, Prime Minister of Montenegro Duško Marković and President of the Spanish government, SI Vice-President Pedro Sánchez. The members of the SI presidium that participated in the meeting included George Papandreou, SI President; Luis Ayala, SI Secretary General; SI Vice-Presidents Victor Benoit (Haiti), Elsa Espinosa (Mexico), Eero Heinäluoma (Finland), Janira Hopffer Almada (Cape Verde), Chantal Kambiwa (Cameroon), Shazia Marri (Pakistan), Rafael Michelini (Uruguay), Mario Nalpatian (Armenia), Julião Mateus Paulo (Angola), Nabil Shaath (Palestine), Bokary Treta (Mali), Ex-officio SI Vice-President and Foreign Minister of the Dominican Republic Miguel Vargas, and SI Honorary Presidents Mustapha Ben Jaafar (Tunisia) and Tarja Halonen, former President of Finland. Also attending the meeting were Maroš Šefčovič, Vice-President of the European Commission; Kalla Ankourao, Foreign Minister of Niger; José Condugua Pacheco, Foreign Minister of Mozambique; and Hélène Marie Laurence Ilboudo Marchal, Minister for women, National Solidarity and Families, of Burkina Faso.

Statement on Venezuela

Original: Spanish

In view of the continuation and deepening of the crisis that affects Venezuela, the SI Presidium reiterates its concern at the degradation and sustained deterioration in the living conditions of the Venezuelan people. The resolution of the current situation will only be possible within the context of the normal functioning of democratic institutions and the full respect for the rights and freedoms of the Venezuelan people. The SI has denounced the constant and serious violations of human rights, the repression, the existence of political prisoners and of exiled citizens. Today, it speaks out once more to demand the release of all political prisoners and respect for all the freedoms and all the rights of all Venezuelans.

The humanitarian emergency that confronts Venezuela is the main reason behind the daily migration of thousands of people in search of a way to overcome the distressing and precarious conditions being suffered by the Venezuelan people. The solidarity extended by the neighbouring countries of the Latin American and Caribbean region to these Venezuelans contrasts with the reality in other continents and must be duly appreciated.

The normalisation of the democratic process in Venezuela will need the full restoration of and respect for the powers of the National Assembly, a sovereign public body with democratic legitimacy. The exercise of the constitutional powers of the National Assembly, a key player in the Venezuelan constitutional order, is the central pillar to design a transition towards democratic normality in the country. The Presidium reiterates its full confidence that the SI member parties in Venezuela will continue to work in search of an appropriate peaceful political way out, leading to the holding of fair and free elections, allowing the recovery of democratic coexistence in the country.

Statement on Nicaragua

Original: Spanish

The Presidium reiterates the condemnation expressed at the last Council meeting of the Socialist International over the responsibility of the authorities of Nicaragua for the growing number of victims, the political polarisation and the violent confrontations that have occurred in that country for more than five months. These occurrences, far from being resolved through a process of dialogue which today is halted, have left more than five hundred dead, thousands wounded and hundreds of political prisoners.

The Presidium considers unacceptable the serious human rights violations that have taken place in Nicaragua during the last months and also condemns the responsibility that lies with the police force, vigilantes and other armed groups, which must be duly established and sanctioned. In order to restore and advance a true dialogue, this should be inclusive and be carried out within a peaceful framework, as has been recently expressed by the Secretary-General of the United Nations. Practices such as the indiscriminate and excessive use of force against protesters and the judicial persecution of the political opposition must end. All political prisoners must be immediately released.

The SI considers unacceptable the hostility shown by the Nicaraguan government towards regional and international bodies which have been involved in the current situation in accordance with their mandate and competence. To declare that the actions of the OAS and the United Nations are interventionist, reveals an outdated view of the relations between sovereignty and human rights. The Presidium calls on the government of Nicaragua to ensure the free and full functioning of international institutions in the country. Finally, the SI

expresses its grave concern over the thousands of Nicaraguans who are fleeing their country and ending up mainly in Costa Rica, aggravating the Central American migration crisis.

Statement on the Middle East

The SI Presidium, during its annual meeting at the UN Headquarters in New York, expressed its concern about the lack of international initiatives to move forward the process to achieve a peaceful resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and made an urgent appeal for statements of support for a two-state solution to be turned into concrete steps toward freedom, justice and security for all.

In the current international political context of increasing threats to global security, the need to bring about a peaceful resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has taken on more importance than ever, and the Socialist International will continue to be a vocal advocate of all efforts to advance the Middle East peace process. For many decades, our organisation has worked in pursuit of a two-state solution with a peaceful future for both Israel and Palestine, together with its member parties in both countries.

The SI Presidium:

Reiterates the call of the SI for immediate recognition of the State of Palestine on the 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital, and its commitment to defend the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and statehood;

Supports the important work of UNWRA for the benefit of Palestinian refugees, and urges all countries to honour their financial commitments to this UN agency;

Reiterates its solidarity with the progressive forces in Israel, including SI member parties, that support full equality for all Israeli citizens regardless of their religion or ethnic origin as well as the establishment of the two-state solution based on international law and UN resolutions;

Recognises the right of civil society to endorse non-violent measures to secure the implementation of international law in the Palestinian territories, insofar as such measures are not intended to delegitimise the State of Israel but to bring an end to occupation and implement the two-state solution;

Calls upon the Israeli government to immediately end its institutional discrimination against its Palestinian, Christian, Muslim and Druze citizens by nullifying all laws that discriminate, including the citizenship law and the recently approved "Nation-State Law of the Jewish People", that denies the right to self-determination to all non-Jews living under Israeli control.

The SI Presidium reiterates the organisation's commitment to peace, democracy, justice and solidarity and the need to confront the divisive populism and nationalism that are becoming more prevalent in the world. This includes an unwavering commitment to peace and security for Israelis and Palestinians, and to working for equality and an end to the Israeli occupation and illegal settlements and the full recognition of the State of Palestine.

Statement on Libya

The Presidium of the Socialist International learned with great concern of the recent violations of the ceasefire agreement in Libya, signed by armed groups in Tripoli on 4 September under the auspices of the United Nations. The Presidium fully supports and encourages the efforts of the United Nations to ensure that this agreement is respected. The development of an inclusive political process leading to the establishment of new, legitimate institutions through the

adoption of a constitution and to the holding of credible, transparent elections, would free the Libyan people from the cycle of violence they have been suffering and would contribute to peace and progress in the whole region.



SI Secretary General meets with new President of Congress, Porfirio Muñoz Ledo

4 October 2018

The SI Secretary General meets with Porfirio Muñoz Ledo, President of the Congress of the Union, LXIV Legislature of Mexico, who was elected on 1 September 2018 by the new majority formed by the Movement of National Regeneration, MORENA

Meeting at the 139th IPU Assembly in Geneva

15 October 2018



An SI meeting during the 139th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union in Geneva was held on Monday 15 October 2018, providing a platform for parliamentarians from SI member

parties attending the Assembly to exchange views on issues figuring on the agenda of this assembly of the IPU and to share information both on their national situations and on issues of particular concern. Chaired by the SI Secretary General, the meeting was attended by parliamentarians from SI parties in Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Burkina Faso, Chile, Dominican Republic, Finland, France, Guinea Bissau, Hungary, Iraq, Italy, Mali, Mexico, Mongolia, Niger, Palestine, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Spain, Switzerland, United Kingdom, Venezuela, and a representative from the Global Fund.

From the opening remarks, a recurrent thread in the discussions was the need to reaffirm the values and principles of social democracy, faced with the current surge in nationalism, populism and the ultra-right, the undermining of democracy in different countries around the world, and the threats to peace. This was perceived as an age of uncertainty driving citizens towards the right, to which the left's response was crucial. Climate change was highlighted as a challenge to every form of human life and required answers too. It was necessary for parties of the left to join forces and be the leaders on this question, as on the defence of human rights.

In advance of the vote by the IPU Assembly on the emergency item, participants engaged in exchanges on the items that had been presented for adoption. There were expressions of concern and solidarity regarding the situation in Venezuela and its dire effects on the Venezuelan people; regarding the plight of Palestinian refugees following the US's decision to cancel aid to UNRWA; and in regard to the search for peace in the Sahel region, where the countries and their peoples faced terrorism, destabilisation and the consequences of migration. It was also noted in this context how closely inter-related were the fates of Africa and Europe, as the success of terrorism in one could directly affect stability in the other. The meeting reiterated an appeal for solidarity with the Sahel, most of the governments of which were headed by members of the SI.

There was broad support for the UN's Global Compact on Migration due to be formally adopted in December. Participants underlined the need to unite in fighting racism and xenophobia, and the fact that migration was a global phenomenon which today affected not just one country or region but all of them across the globe, as could be seen throughout Latin America, Africa, Europe, the Middle East and Asia. A deepening of solidarity was required, as well as a focus on the root causes which needed addressing. Among the root causes cited were failed states such as Haiti, Venezuela or Libya, conflicts such as in Yemen, the dire situation affecting the Palestinian people, the increase in terrorism and massive economic hardship. The migration phenomenon was perceived as a common challenge which required joint solutions, recognising the rights and needs of migrants, including refugees and internally displaced persons. The role of the SI was seen as important to express a common position globally and to highlight the humanitarian response.

During the session, participants had the opportunity to raise latest developments and matters of concern within their respective parties, countries or regions. There were many expressions of appreciation of the SI for the support extended to their parties and gratitude for such meetings which were so important in enabling them to share views and experiences with other members of the SI family.

Concluding the meeting, the SI Secretary General spoke of the need to focus on the issues that really matter today. We needed to underscore the values of social democracy, the unqualified principle that "We are the left", and that we stand for solidarity, equality and justice. This was crucial to counter the prevailing tide of egoism and self-interest, and to preserve our democracies and prioritise the needs and interests of the people.

Parliamentary delegation from Mongolia headed by SI Vice-President and former Prime Minister S. Batbold in London

31 October 2018

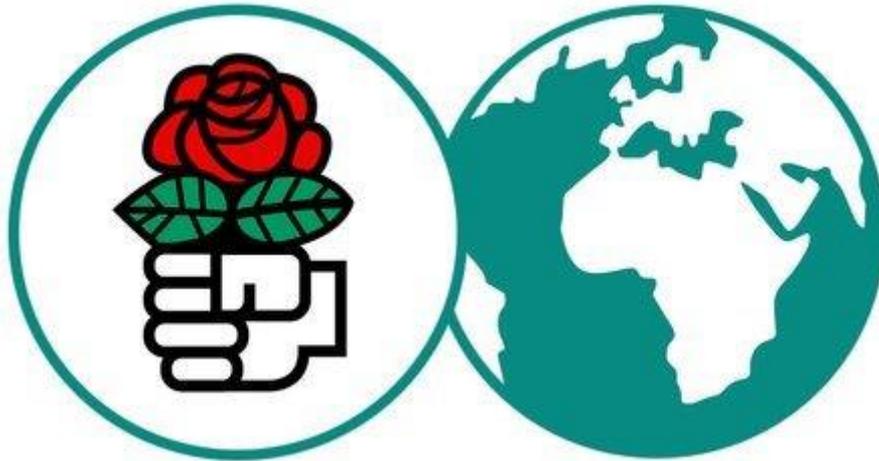
Socialist International Vice-President and former Prime Minister, Sukhbaatar Batbold, heading a delegation of members of Parliament held discussions in London with the Secretary General of the Socialist International.



From left to right: Mr N Uchral, Member of Parliament of Mongolia, Mr D Lundeejantsan, Member of Parliament of Mongolia, Chairman of Standing committee on State Structure, Mrs M Oyunchimeg, Member of Parliament of Mongolia, Chairwoman of Standing committee on Petitions, Luis Ayala, SI Secretary General, Sukhbaatar Batbold, SI Vice-President and former Prime Minister, Mr Ya Sanjmyatav, Member of Parliament of Mongolia, Deputy Speaker of the Parliament of Mongolia, Mr N Tulga, Ambassador of Mongolia to the UK

'A global call for a sustainable world society – before it's too late'

30 November 2018



Socialist International

'A global call for a sustainable world society – before it's too late'

Despite the efforts of the United Nations and many governments, international organizations and civil society movements against climate change, recent data prove that if we don't intensify our action it will be too late.

The UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), at its most recent meeting, stated that *there is only a dozen years for global warming to be kept to a maximum of 1.5C, beyond which even half a degree will significantly worsen the risks of drought, floods, extreme heat and poverty for hundreds of millions of people. Urgent and unprecedented changes are needed to reach the target, which is affordable and feasible.*

On the eve of the forthcoming COP24, which opens at the beginning of December, we, leaders of the largest global progressive political family, the Socialist International, are launching an appeal to increase multilateral cooperation on this crucial challenge for humankind, and to deploy more intensive action at all levels.

The Socialist International has for years been active in identifying the multi-faceted dimension of the fight against climate change. Through the work of its 'Commission for a Sustainable World Society' the SI has also outlined needed policies, such as a global tax on CO₂ (and other greenhouse gases).

We are committed and active in bringing about a revolution in thinking, policies and lifestyles, to address these new challenges. Creating a new paradigm in how we act, how we produce, and how we consume. This mind-shift requires the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to become part of our basic education curriculum, professional training and R&D, as well as our policy decisions.

It is crucial the SDGs be implemented if we are to fight poverty and illiteracy, secure peace, protect human rights, manage population movements, and guarantee just, sustainable societies for generations to come.

Key to the success of this sea-change is social justice, equality and a healthy, cohesive, participative society which respects the dignity of all.

We deplore conservative and populist circles around the world who systematically undermine the efforts to combat climate change. Their motives coincide with the powerful oil and gas industries that vehemently lobby against any regulation that might undercut their profits while protecting the environment. We call on all to oppose conscious efforts to distort scientific facts and minimize the catastrophic risks of global warming.

The Sustainable Development Goals are a cornerstone for a wider Global Social Contract. A Social Contract that can unite our planet's governments and peoples at a time of heightened discord, through common goals that promote responsible cooperation and regulation.

The social impacts of Climate change are associated with a great number of risks, amongst them, financial risks which need to be assessed in future investment.

Social partners, civil society and citizens need to rise to the challenge of social responsibility, integrating the efforts for low carbon societies into their daily lives.

We call on social partners and civil society to unite in our common efforts to implement the SDGs.

We are committed to be front runners in the fight for a more humane, sustainable planet!

30 November 2018

Signatories

(In alphabetical order)

H.E. Mahmoud Abbas President of Palestine, Chairman of Fatah

Hon. Samuel Ofose Ampofo Chairman of the National Democratic Congress, NDC, Ghana

Araz Alizade Leader of the Social Democratic Party of Azerbaijan, SDPA

Isabel Allende Vice-President of the SI, Senator, Socialist Party, PS, Chile

Almazbek Atambaev Chairman of the Social Democratic Party of Kyrgyzstan, SDPK

Colette Avital Vice-President of the SI, Meretz, Israel

Luis Ayala Secretary General of the Socialist International

Omar Barboza President of the National Assembly, President of A New Era, UNT, Venezuela

Sükhbaatar Batbold Vice-President of the SI, former Prime Minister of Mongolia, Mongolian People's Party, MPP

Mustafa Barghouti Leader of the Palestinian National Initiative, PNI

Mohamed Bazoum President of the Party for Democracy and Socialism of Niger, PNDS-Tarayya

Mustafa Ben Jaafar Honorary President of the SI, Ettakatol, Tunisia

Victor Benoit President of the Social Democrat Assembly for the Progress of Haiti, Rasanbleman, Vice-President of the SI

Davor Bernardić President of the Social Democratic Party, SDP, Croatia

Rubén Berríos President of the Puerto Rican Independence Party, PIP, Puerto Rico, Honorary President of the SI

Jorge Bom Jesus President of the Movement for the Liberation of São Tomé and Príncipe/Social Democratic Party, MLSTP/PSD

Yury Buzdugan Leader of the Social Democratic Party of Ukraine, SDPU

Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas Honorary President of the SI, Mexico

Carlos César President of the Socialist Party, PS, Portugal, Vice-President of the SI

Ousainou Darboe Leader of the United Democratic Party, UDP, Vice-President of The Gambia

Ahmed Ould Daddah President of the Assembly of Democratic Forces, RFD, Mauritania, Vice-President of the SI

Sher Bahadur Deuba President of the Nepali Congress Party, former Prime Minister of Nepal

Elio Di Rupo President of the Socialist Party, PS, Belgium, Vice-President of the SI, former Prime Minister

Ousmane Tanor Dieng Secretary General of the Socialist Party, PS, Senegal, Vice-President of the SI

Samuel Doria Medina President of the National Unity Party, Bolivia

Mohamed Hadj Djilani First Secretary of the Socialist Forces Front, FFS, Algeria

Colum Eastwood Leader of the Social Democratic and Labour Party, SDLP, Northern Ireland

Álvaro Elizalde President of the Socialist Party, PS, Chile

Turfan Erhürman Leader of the Republican Turkish Party, CTP, Cyprus

Andres Esono Ondo Secretary General of the Convergence for Social Democracy, CPDS, Equatorial Guinea

Elsa Espinoza Vice-President of the SI, Institutional Revolutionary Party, PRI, Mexico

Khelil Ezzaouia President of ETTAKATOL, Tunisia

Olivier Faure First Secretary of the Socialist Party, PS, France

Robert Fico Leader of the Social Democracy Party, SMER, Former Prime Minister of Slovakia

Rafael Filizzola Leader of the Progressive Democratic Party, PDP, Paraguay

Mizuho Fukushima Vice-President of the SI, Social Democratic Party, SDP, Japan

Fofi Gennimata President of the Movement for Change, Greece

Gerardo Giovagnoli Secretary of the Party of Socialists and Democrats, PSD, San Marino

Pedro Miguel González Secretary General of the Democratic Revolutionary Party, PRD, Panama

Ouafa Hajji President of the Socialist International Women

Tarja Halonen Honorary President of the SI, Former President of Finland

Eero Heinäluoma Vice-President of the SI, Finnish Social Democratic Party, SDP, Finland

Janira Hopffer Almada Leader of the African Party for the Independence of Cape Verde, PAICV, Vice-President of the SI

Brendan Howlin Leader of the Labour Party, Ireland

Pendukeni Iivula-Ithana Vice-President of the SI, SWAPO Party, Namibia

Bernal Jiménez Vice-President of the SI, National Liberation Party, PLN, Costa Rica

Walid Jumblatt Leader of the Progressive Socialist Party, PSP, Lebanon

H.E. Roch Marc Christian Kaboré President of Burkina Faso, Leader of the People's Movement for Progress, MPP

Chantal Kambiwa Vice-President of the SI, Social Democratic Front, SDF, Cameroon

H.E. Ibrahim Boubacar Keïta President of Mali

Ukhnaagiin Khürelsükh Prime Minister of Mongolia, Chairman of the Mongolian People's Party, MPP

Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu Leader of the Republican People's Party, CHP, Turkey

Albin Kurti Leader of the Movement for Self-Determination, Vetëvendosje, Kosovo

Driss Lachguar First Secretary of the Socialist Union of Popular Forces, USFP Morocco

Ricardo Lagos Former President of Chile, former Special United Nations Envoy on Climate Change, Chair of the SI Commission for a Sustainable World Society

Rasim Ljajić Leader of the Social Democratic Party of Serbia, SDPS

Pia Locatelli Vice-President of the SI, Italian Socialist Party, PSI, Italy

Pere López Leader of the Social Democratic Party, PS, Andorra

Carlos Lupi President of the Democratic Labour Party, PDT, Brazil, Vice-President of the SI

Ahmed Majdalani Leader of the Palestinian Popular Struggle Front, Palestine

Carlos Maldonado President of the Radical Party, PR, Chile

Hrant Markarian Chairman of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation, ARF, Armenia

Shazia Marri Vice-President of the SI, Pakistan People's Party, PPP

Seiji Mataichi President of the Social Democratic Party, SDP, Japan

Julião Mateus Paulo Vice-President of the SI, MPLA, Angola

Mustafa Mauludi Secretary General of the Kurdistan Democratic Party of Iran

Attila Mesterhazy Vice-President of the SI, Hungarian Socialist Party, MSzP, Hungary

Rafael Michelini President of New Space, PNE, Uruguay, Vice-President of the SI

Heraldo Muñoz President of the Party for Democracy, PPD, Chile

Mario Nalpatian Vice-President of the SI, Armenian Revolutionary Federation, ARF, Armenia

Riccardo Nencini Secretary General of the Italian Socialist Party, PSI, Italy

Nermin Nikšić President of the Social Democratic Party, SDP, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Johnson Asiedu Nketiah Vice-President of the SI, National Democratic Congress, NDC, Ghana

Julia Ojiambo Leader of the Labour Party of Kenya

Cemal Özyiğit Leader of the Social Democracy Party, TDP, Cyprus

George Papandreou President of the Socialist International, former Prime Minister of Greece

Peter Phillips Leader of the People's National Party, PNP, Jamaica

Vlad Plahotniuc Chairman of the Democratic Party of Moldova, Vice-President of the SI

Henry Ramos Secretary General of the Democratic Action Party, Venezuela, SI Vice-President

Antti Rinne Chairman of the Social Democratic Party, SDP, Finland

Jesús Rodríguez Vice-President of the SI, Radical Civic Union, UCR, Argentina

Pedro Sánchez President of the Spanish Government, Secretary General of the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party, PSOE, Spain, Vice-President of the SI

Tiémoko Sangaré President of African Party for Solidarity and Justice, Adema-PASJ, Mali

Nabeel Shaath Vice-President of the SI, Fatah, Palestine

Jan J. Sithole President of the Swazi Democratic Party, SWADEPA, Swaziland

Mikalai Statkevich Leader of the Belarusian Social Democratic Party (Narodnaya Hramada), BSDP, Belarus

Sandra Torres Leader of the National Unity for Hope, UNE, Guatemala, Vice-President of the SI

Bokary Treta President of the Assembly for Mali, RPM, Vice-President of the SI

Zharmakhan Tuyakbay Chairman of the Nationwide Social Democratic Party, OSDP, Kazakhstan

Miguel Vargas President of the Dominican Revolutionary Party, PRD, Dominican Republic, Vice-President of the SI

Faysal Ali Warabe Leader of the Justice and Welfare Party, Somaliland

Svetlina Yolcheva President of the Bulgarian Social Democrats, PBSB, Bulgaria

Bilawal Bhutto Zardari Chair of the People's Pakistan Party, PPP

Martin Ziguélé President of the Movement for the Liberation of the Central African People, MPLC, Central African Republic

Inauguration of President Andrés Manuel López Obrador

1 December 2018



On the 1st of December 2018, the newly elected President of Mexico, Andrés Manuel López Obrador, of the National Regeneration Movement (Movimiento de Regeneración Nacional), MORENA, was sworn in as the 58th President of Mexico. The Socialist International Secretary General Luis Ayala was among the invited guests at the inauguration ceremony.

Marrakesh: Intergovernmental Conference on the Global Compact for Migration

10 December 2018

"All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights"



The Intergovernmental Conference, which convened under the auspices of the United Nations General Assembly on 10-11 December in Marrakesh, Morocco, was opened by the UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres. At the Conference, 164 countries formally adopted The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM), which sets out a common, comprehensive approach to international migration that directly affects some 258 million people who now live in a different country to the one they were born in. The Socialist International was represented at the conference by its Secretary General, Luis Ayala.



Meeting of the SI Council in Santo Domingo

28-29 January 2019



Representatives of Socialist International member parties from around the world and invited guests gathered in Santo Domingo on 28-29 January for the SI Council, hosted by the Dominican Revolutionary Party (PRD), the SI member party in the Dominican Republic. The agenda of the meeting centred on three main themes: Promoting multilateralism to secure peace, sustainable development, to target poverty, achieve greater equality, and to ensure a world with more solidarity; Defending rights and freedoms against intolerance, discrimination, xenophobia and populism; and Protecting our democracies from new threats – the deliberate discrediting of democratic institutions and the press, fake news, cyber-attacks and invasive technology.

On behalf of the host party, Miguel Vargas, a vice-president of the SI, leader of the PRD and foreign minister of the Dominican Republic, welcomed delegates to Santo Domingo. He underlined the importance of the work of the SI to address the common tasks faced by all its member parties and to find multilateral approaches to the three main challenges faced by the world. He defined these as strengthening democracy, combating climate change and reducing inequality and emphasised that social democracy had a lot to contribute on these issues.

In his opening remarks, Luis Ayala recalled the long history of cooperation between the SI and the PRD, started by José Francisco Peña Gómez. It was gratifying for him to see the successful results of the Agreement of Shared Government of National Unity, which he signed as witness on behalf of the SI in 2015. The SI secretary general described multilateralism as the key to achieving peace, considering that the SI needed more than ever to confront and counteract populism and xenophobia with its principles and ideals in order to ensure that a different world view could prevail.

The SI President George Papandreou also mentioned the special significance of the Dominican Republic for the SI, congratulating the PRD on its 80th anniversary and the progress made in the country in recent years. He recalled that his last visit to the country had been during the financial crisis, the lessons of which the international community had not learned, as could be

seen by the suffering of the middle and working classes and growing inequalities. He called for more cooperation, democracy and solidarity in order to humanise globalisation.

The inaugural session of the Council was then addressed by President of the Dominican Republic Danilo Medina, who noted that, though his party was not a member of the SI, the trajectory of the organisation remained a point of reference for all progressive parties. He spoke of the need to remain vigilant in order to defend the achievements of recent decades, including democratic advances, at a time when distrust in institutions had spread along with made up threats based on propaganda. The issues on the agenda would affect all people beyond national borders, he considered, hoping that the Council would be fruitful for all participants.

Contributions were made on the first main theme of multilateralism from delegates from different countries and continents, united by their belief in the value of multilateralism to tackle the challenges of peace and sustainable development and ensure a world with more solidarity. The value of the multilateral approach on issues of peace was central to a number of speeches made by delegates, and reflected in the declarations and resolutions later adopted by the Council, including those on Palestine and the two-state solution, on Western Sahara and on the threat of nuclear conflict. The declaration on Palestine, drafted in coordination with the Israeli and Palestinian delegations to the Council, was itself an example of the value of mutual cooperation in questions of peace and conflict resolution.

Many contributors to the discussions noted with concern the recent developments in Venezuela, and the ongoing disregard for the democratic process by the ruling regime. Having heard perspectives from Venezuelan delegates, and the support offered to the democratic forces in Venezuela from parties in the region and around the world, the Council adopted a declaration on Venezuela in which called for a peaceful resolution to the crisis and the urgent holding of proper free and fair elections in the country.

The recent rise in populism, accompanied by growing intolerance, discrimination and xenophobia was discussed with great concern by delegates, who emphasised the critical role of social democracy to present alternatives to this simplistic and divisive worldview. The importance of reducing inequalities, increasing opportunities and achieving sustainable growth to the benefit of all citizens were highlighted in a declaration on this theme.

The timing of the Council in the days following the International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust was noted by several speakers, who reminded all delegates of the horrors that resulted from xenophobia, intolerance and totalitarianism, and the sentiment of all those present was reflected in a Resolution on Holocaust remembrance.

For many decades the SI has been at the forefront of the struggle to secure, advance, consolidate and defend democracy in all parts of the world, and discussions on the third main theme focused on how to do this in face of the many new challenges emerging to democracy and its institutions in the digital age. These concerns were the focus of a Declaration on protecting our democracy from new threats. The Council also adopted a number of declarations relating to specific national issues raised by member parties, including declarations on Bolivia, Puerto Rico and the Kurdish people.

The closing address of the Council was given by Pedro Sánchez, president of the government of Spain, leader of PSOE and vice-president of the SI, who declared that socialists were those who defended freedom and the weak. He emphasised that the citizens of Venezuela and Nicaragua needed to know that their governments were not socialist, as there could be no socialism without freedom. The SI and its members represented those who were creating ideas that would change the world, rejecting the conservative, populist and nationalist policies of inequality, privilege and exclusion, and bringing reconciliation, democracy, progress and dignity.

Maurice Poler (AD, Venezuela), co-chair of the Finance and Administration Committee (SIFAC), presented the latest accounts of the International and its budget for 2019. Lack of payment of membership fees was a severe constraint on the ability of the organisation to carry out its programme of activities and he reminded parties that the payment of their membership fees was a statutory obligation.

The report of the SI Ethics Committee, delivered by its chair Arianne Fontenelle (PS, Belgium), contained a number of proposals on membership in the SI. The committee considered that the full membership of the Philippines Social Democratic Party should be reinstated and also recommended the upgrading to full membership of the UDPS (DR Congo) and to consultative membership of PALU (DR Congo) and MRD (Djibouti). The committee had also rejected a number of applications for membership. The decisions on membership were approved by the Council. As a result of gross violations of human rights and democratic values committed by the government of Nicaragua, the committee had voted to expel the ruling party, FSLN, from the SI, a decision which the Council voted to confirm.

The SI also held the first meeting of its Committee on Gender Equality on 28 January in Santo Domingo, co-chaired by the presidents of the SI and SIW. The committee adopted a plan of action comprising a series of decisions aimed at achieving gender parity within its structures, and encouraging its member parties in the promotion of parity.



Declarations and Resolutions, Meeting of the SI Council in Santo Domingo 28-29 January 2019

Declaration on Venezuela

Original: Spanish

The Council of the Socialist International, meeting on 28-29 January 2019 in Santo Domingo, expressed its grave concern at the deepening political, economic and humanitarian crisis in Venezuela.

Recalling its previous statements on the situation in Venezuela, in particular the Resolution of the SI Council in June 2018 and the statement issued by the SI Presidium in September 2018, the Socialist International:

Reiterates its position that the electoral process of May 2018 lacked democratic credibility, as they were carried out through the outlawing of leaders and political parties, obliging this

International to repudiate this process that is contrary to the democratic norms of competition, freedom and guarantees. The National Assembly is the legitimate authority to lead the democratic transition.

Expresses its enormous concern at the repression carried out against the Venezuelan people by the illegitimate regime of Nicolás Maduro, and urges the full restoration of the constitutional order. To date, 35 people have been killed in the protests, more than 850 detained and hundreds injured, especially in the poorer districts of the entire country, at the hands of the security forces commanded by Nicolás Maduro;

Repeats its previous calls for the full restoration of and respect for the democratically legitimate National Assembly, which is the centre of the democratic order in Venezuela and has a fundamental role to play in the restoration of democratic normality in the country;

Recognises the efforts of Juan Guaidó, president of the National Assembly and recognised by a significant part of the international community as interim president of Venezuela, to bring about a transition to democracy, supported by the legitimate National Assembly.

Underlines that the democratic legitimacy of the president and government in Venezuela comes only from the freely expressed will of the Venezuelan people and categorically rejects any form of external military intervention to bring about regime change in Venezuela;

Calls upon the Venezuelan people to resolve their differences peacefully, considering that the only way forward for Venezuela is the holding of new elections, overseen by a new, fully independent and impartial electoral authority, which must now happen as a matter of urgency. These must take place with the participation of those previously disqualified arbitrarily and be accompanied by the release of political prisoners;

Reiterates its solidarity with the Venezuelan people who are facing extraordinary suffering as they struggle to recover democracy in their country, and urges the swift provision of humanitarian assistance to alleviate the food and health emergency across the country.

Declaration on Holocaust Remembrance

The Council of the Socialist International, gathered in Santo Domingo on 28-29 January 2019:

Notes that racial, ethnic and religious prejudice, discrimination and hatred have caused untold human suffering throughout recorded history;

Recalls that the prejudice, discrimination and hatred that arose out of pre-existing anti-Semitism was a condition precedent to the Holocaust perpetrated by Nazi Germany, its allies and accomplices resulting in the annihilation of six million Jews and countless members of other minorities;

Notes with concern that anti-Semitic acts of varying nature and intensity have multiplied lately in Europe, the United States, Canada and elsewhere;

Decries the growing tendencies towards Holocaust denial and the re-writing of history;

Recalls Resolution A/RES/60/7 on Holocaust remembrance adopted on 1 November 2005 by the United Nations General Assembly designating 27 January as International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust;

Joins the United Nations in marking International Holocaust Day and in remembering the victims of one of the worst crimes committed in human history;

Rejects any denial of the Holocaust as a historical event, either in full or in part;

Condemns without reserve all manifestations of religious intolerance, incitement, harassment or violence against persons or communities based on ethnic origin or religious belief, wherever they occur;

Calls upon governments and political parties to fight against all forms of racism, discrimination and Holocaust denial.

Declaration on Protecting our Democracies from New Threats

The Council of the Socialist International, meeting in Santo Domingo on 28-29 January 2019, discussed as a main theme the new threats to democracy that have recently emerged, among them the deliberate discrediting of democratic institutions and the press, fake news, cyber-attacks and invasive technology. In light of these rapidly emerging and developing threats, the global social democratic movement must develop a coordinated response to safeguard and protect democracy.

Attacks on democratic institutions and the press have become more and more prevalent, and are no longer limited to those on the fringes of the political debate. When elected officials denigrate and undermine the institutions that uphold democracy, this has the effect of eroding trust, weakening the democratic process and threatening progress made over the recent years and decades in this regard. Likewise, a free press is one of the fundamental pillars of a democracy, in which citizens can have confidence that those who represent them are held to account.

The rise of alternative sources of news and the emergence of social media have contributed to a more open flow of information and facilitated the spreading of diverse viewpoints. These new media have played a role in ensuring opposition voices are heard free from censorship and suppression by undemocratic regimes, but have also shown themselves to be susceptible to exploitation by those seeking to spread misinformation.

The spread of fake news requires vigilance from citizens and politicians alike, in an environment where those responsible for this false information are exploiting the functional logic of social networks with the express intent of influencing the choice of the electorate. As citizens increasingly get their news and information through social media, it is incumbent on the owners of these platforms to take responsibility for ensuring that the information disseminated through their services is verifiable and conforms with the national laws that are in place to prevent the manipulation of public opinion and interference in electoral processes.

New technology, big data and the rise of social media have also changed the way electoral campaigns are conducted and represent a fundamental challenge to the notion of free and fair elections if safeguards are not put in place. With unprecedented access to detailed demographic and personal information on large sections of the electorate, the largest social media providers can directly impact information flow and the effectiveness of political campaigns, creating the potential for manipulation of public opinion and interference in domestic electoral processes by external actors.

The protection of personal data is a significant concern in light of the risks posed by powerful algorithms for personality profiling and the dangers of identity fraud. Ownership of one's own personal data should be regarded as a human right that is respected by all public and private organisations that have access to this data.

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.

Resolution on Puerto Rico

Original: Spanish

In the context of the continuing and growing colonial dominance of the United States upon Puerto Rico through the imposition of a Fiscal Supervisory Board with all-embracing powers over the government of the Island, the Socialist International reiterates its historic support to the inalienable right of the Puerto Rican nation to its self-determination and independence. The SI extends also its support to the unanimous call of the Special Committee on Decolonization of the United Nations for the United States to take the necessary measures to put an end to the current condition of political subordination of Puerto Rico.

Resolution on Western Sahara

Original: Spanish

The Council following the developments in connection with this issue, notes that after its last session, and at the request of the Secretary-General of the UN and his special envoy, a meeting has taken place on 5 and 6 December 2018 at the UN Office in Geneva, gathering around the same table Morocco, Polisario, Algeria and Mauritania.

The Council expresses its support to the call made by the UN to all parties to commit themselves positively and in good faith in the United Nations process in the search for a peaceful, political, realistic and mutually accepted solution, in accordance with the Security Council Resolution No. 2440 of 31 October 2018.

Declaration on the Threat of Nuclear Conflict

The Council of the SI, meeting in Santo Domingo on 28-29 January 2019, considers it necessary and relevant to draw the attention of SI member parties and the world community as a whole to the acute problem of the growing threat of nuclear conflict, caused by the deformation of the existing treaty system of ensuring strategic security in the world.

In recent years, strategic stability, understood as the level of threat of nuclear war, has rapidly deteriorated. At the moment, the level of threat is comparable to the period preceding the Caribbean crisis (Cuban missile crisis), which almost led humanity to a global catastrophe and was preceded in the 1950s by an essentially unlimited arms race.

In the years following the Second World War, the world maintained nuclear deterrence based on the fear of a nuclear apocalypse. However, today this situation has become more and more unsteady as the technological obstacles to acquiring nuclear weapons have diminished.

Also of concern are the US withdrawal in 2002 from the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty (ABMT), and more recently from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (Iran nuclear deal) and Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty, which undermine the foundations of the non-proliferation regime, a key part of which was the commitment to reduce arsenals.

These dangerous steps should encourage peace-loving forces on the planet to take actions that can be called a qualitatively new stage in the struggle for peace with the core requirement to prevent a destructive nuclear war.

The SI calls on its member parties and parliaments of the world to contribute to the revival of the universal struggle for peace, in line with the Declaration of Principles of the SI, which defines peace as a basic value.

Declaration on the Kurdish People

In the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, the SI welcomes the resumption of the dialogue between the federal government and the Kurdish Regional Government. We call upon the new government of Iraq and all the political parties to make arrangements, which reflect a true participation of the Kurds in the new government based on partnership, consensus and balance in the important federal institutions. We call upon both governments in Baghdad and Erbil to stabilise the situation in the disputed territories and allow a joint administration in order to prevent ISIS and similar groups from exploiting the post-referendum tensions in these areas for their own advantage and to protect the rights of the Kurdish people and other ethnic and religious minorities in the region.

The Syrian war, which lasted for many years and now reaches its end, has failed to resolve the Syrian crisis. It only brought destruction and death. All those years of war that went by have proved that only a political solution can lead to a way out of the Syrian crisis. It is, thus, time for all Syrians to sit on the negotiating table, under the coordination of the UN, in search of a political-democratic solution for the country. The region of Rojava / North-Eastern Syria has proven to be a safe zone. It has managed to create a model of governance based on self-government, peoples' coexistence and democracy and can be a model for the whole of Syria. The peoples of Rojava / North-Eastern Syria have given much to the fight against terrorism, especially against the terrorism of ISIS.

We in the Socialist International recognise the threat that the withdrawal of coalition forces headed by the United States can create. Any sudden or precipitated withdrawal can result in the creation of a political and military crisis in the region that could lead to the resurgence of terrorism and result in another serious refugee crisis.

The Socialist International supports a fair solution for the Kurdish people, so as to guarantee the unity and sovereignty of Syria, within the framework of decentralized governance, according to the model of democratic federalism, within the framework of a new constitution.

In line with the commitment of the SI to the cause of the Kurdish people, a meeting of the SI Committee on the Kurdish Question will be held in the near future in the Kurdistan region of Iraq.

Declaration - Taking Action to Free and Protect Palestine, Save the Two-State Solution

The Council of the Socialist International, meeting in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic on January 28- 29, recalls its previous resolutions and declarations on the question of Palestine and the Middle East Peace Process, in particular recent Council and Presidium meetings of the SI since 2010, and makes an urgent call upon all its members to take concrete measures in

order to save the prospects of a just and lasting peace between Israel, Palestine and the rest of the region. In this regard the SI:

Reaffirms the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, including the right to their independent State of Palestine on the 1967 lines with East Jerusalem as its capital. It reaffirms its commitment, in accordance with international law, to bring a complete end to the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories that started in 1967, so as to achieve the two-state solution, as two sovereign democratic states for all their citizens, living in peace and harmony; and a just negotiated solution to the issue of the Palestinian refugees.

After more than 25 years of failure to achieve peace through a bilateral process, we believe that time has come for the international community to meet its responsibilities under international law and bring an end to the Israeli occupation.

Recalling our 2011 Athens Council declaration on the Middle East, whereby we called for the recognition of the State of Palestine, the SI members reaffirm this commitment and:

- Declare it has become mandatory and urgent for all members of the Socialist International, especially those in government that have not recognised the State of Palestine in accordance with UNGA Resolution 67/19 of 2012, to do so as soon as possible.
- Congratulate the Irish and Chilean parliaments for advancing legislation concerning the Israeli settlements in the occupied State of Palestine.
- Support a greater international action in order to achieve a just and lasting peace based on International Law for Palestine and Israel, including an end to the Israeli occupation.
- Support a total end to the settlement activities, the immediate cessation of the destruction of homes and the deportation of Palestinians.
- Encourage a non-violent approach at all levels by all parties, including acts of settlers' violence aimed at Palestinian civilians, and the cessation of all forms of violence against the non-violent Palestinian resistance.
- The Council further calls upon the US administration to reconsider its one-sided positions that are favouring only Israel. We regret the US decision to withdraw from the Human Rights Council as well as from UNESCO and strongly condemn the steps taken by the Trump administration, including the recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital and cutting aid to UNRWA. We call upon the rest of the international community to endorse an international conference for the Middle East Peace Process based on the relevant UN resolutions, international law and the Arab Peace Initiative.
- Emphasise that the only political solution for Israel and Palestine is one where international law and UN resolutions are implemented, with the human rights of all citizens respected regardless of their national origin, religion or gender. It is in this spirit that SI reiterates its call upon the Israeli Parliament to eliminate all laws that discriminate against its Arab-Palestinian citizens, including the ban on family reunification and the "Jewish nation-state" law.
- Reiterate their solidarity with the progressive forces in Israel, including SI member parties that support full equality for all Israeli citizens regardless of their religion or ethnic origin as well as the establishment of the two-state solution based on International Law.

Resolution on Bolivia

Original: Spanish

The SI Council takes note of the warning of the risk to democracy outlined by the delegate of its member party National Unity (UN) of Bolivia.

The Socialist International calls on the government and the opposition parties in this country to deepen democratic values and principles, urging the Supreme Electoral Tribunal of Bolivia to guarantee free and transparent elections this year, 2019.

Socialist International Secretary General in Venezuela

22 February 2019



Leadership of the National Assembly of Venezuela with the SI Secretary General

The SI Secretary General, Luis Ayala, held a series of meetings in Venezuela from 18 to 22 February with the authorities of the National Assembly and with its three member parties in the country, Acción Democrática (AD), Un Nuevo Tiempo (UNT) and Voluntad Popular (VP), following the world Council meeting of the International held in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, at the end of January, where the situation in Venezuela was discussed.

During his visit, the Secretary General was received by the Junta Directiva, the leadership, of the National Assembly of Venezuela, composed of its President Juan Guaidó (VP)

who is recognised by a significant part of the international community as interim President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, its First Vice-President Edgar Zambrano (AD), the Second Vice-President Stalin González (UNT), and the Secretary Edison Ferrer (PJ).

The meetings with the SI member parties included Henry Ramos, leader of Acción Democrática and a Vice-President of the SI, along with other members of the AD leadership; Manuel Rosales, leader of Un Nuevo Tiempo, and members of the party's leadership including the former president of the National Assembly during the previous period, Omar Barboza; and contacts with the leader of Voluntad Popular, Leopoldo López, who for five years now has been a political prisoner; with Freddy Guevara, and other members of the party leadership.

The discussions focussed in the first instance on the current situation of the country and its political, economic and humanitarian crisis; the political crisis resulting from the lack of a legitimate mandate for the current regime, while there persist violations of human rights, political prisoners and State violence with a continuing number of victims; the painful economic reality and the absence of opportunities which today afflicts the people of Venezuela; and the grave humanitarian crisis, particularly in regard to the tragic state of the health system and the absence of medicines with the consequent rise in the number of deaths, as confirmed by recent information from the World Health Organisation, WHO.

Among the matters addressed in the meetings was the fact that the electoral process of May 2018, denounced at the time by the Socialist International, did not have the necessary legitimacy and democratic credibility, and that at present the National Assembly, despite the regime's efforts to ignore its powers and mandate, is the only existent legitimate institution of government and therefore has today a central role in the restoration of democracy, as the expression of popular sovereignty, whose mandate is valid until the end of 2020.

During the meetings, the need to resolve political differences between Venezuelans peacefully, as called by the last SI Council, was reiterated, as well as the rejection of any form of foreign military intervention.

Also transmitted was the fraternal and constant solidarity of the International with its member parties and the Venezuelan people in their efforts to recover their freedoms and rights, re-establish democracy and to face the devastating food and health emergency that they are suffering.

Only the holding of free and fair elections, supervised by a new electoral authority that is fully independent and impartial, without arbitrary disqualifications or political prisoners, will allow democracy to be recovered and the normality of the political life of the nation to be re-established.

In the pursuit of these objectives, the International and its members will continue to accompany the Venezuelan people in their efforts for freedom and democracy.

Socialist International marks International Women's Day

8 March 2019

On the occasion of International Women's Day 2019, the Socialist International reiterates its unwavering commitment to gender equality and women's rights, causes which have always been and will remain at the heart of the agenda of the global social democratic movement. Today is a moment to reflect on the significant progress made globally towards gender equality, but equally to focus on the important challenges and obstacles that remain, and the ambition, dedication and political will required to overcome them.

True gender equality must exist on all levels and in all sectors of society. This means everything from equal rights and access to education for girls, to equal employment and the elimination of the gender pay gap, to equality at the highest levels of leadership and decision-making in political, economic and public life.

Equal rights and access to education are the foundation of an equal society and vital to ensure the empowerment of girls and women and their full participation in society without prejudice or discrimination. Likewise, gender balance in the workplace can help communities and enterprises thrive while helping the full potential of humankind for development, prosperity and peace to be achieved. Equal opportunities for women to reach leadership positions and to participate fully at all levels of decision-making can form part of a virtuous circle, as the current in-built gender biases present in our societies are eroded. Through the full and equal participation of women in all aspects political and public life, prejudices can be overcome and values reshaped to recognise the rights of women and promote empowerment.

There is still a great deal to do, and the pace of progress on equality and women's rights must increase. It remains regrettably the case that for many women and girls across the globe, a life free from violence, discrimination and harmful practices remains out of reach. These fundamental injustices must be brought to an end, as nothing less than the elimination of violence and exploitation of women and girls and an end to early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation is acceptable.

The Socialist International recalls the roots of International Women's Day, which was first marked as a result of a resolution of the Second International Conference of Socialist Women on the occasion of the 1910 Copenhagen International Socialist Congress. For the Socialist International and its members, the issue of women's equality will continue to be a primary focus, not only today as we mark International Women's Day, but on every other day of the

year and for as long as it takes to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls in all countries of the world.

Socialist International condemns despicable terrorist attack in Christchurch

15 March 2019



We stand together with the people of New Zealand

The Socialist International is shocked and saddened by the terrorist attack in Christchurch that has claimed the lives of 49 people. This horrific act, which the SI emphatically condemns, was targeted against innocent Muslim worshippers as they peacefully prayed in two mosques in the city, and is deplorable in its brutality and the hateful ideology espoused by those who carried it out.

The International extends its deepest condolences and sympathies to all those affected by this tragedy and expresses its full solidarity with the people of New Zealand and the Muslim community in Christchurch, New Zealand and around the world as they come to terms with the consequences of a truly atrocious act. We must stand united against Islamophobia, bigotry, extremism and terror, defending freedom for all people to practice their beliefs without fear of discrimination, hatred and violence.

Socialist International in solidarity with the victims of Cyclone Idai

20 March 2019

The Socialist International is deeply saddened by the massive devastation and loss of life caused by Cyclone Idai in south-eastern Africa. According to the United Nations, the cyclone has affected more than 2 million people across Mozambique, Malawi and Zimbabwe and may be the worst ever natural disaster to strike the southern hemisphere. The humanitarian emergency resulting from the cyclone continues to worsen due to extensive flooding, which has left many stranded, without shelter or access to clean water. Aid agencies and international organisations fear that the death toll from the disaster will continue to rise.

The thoughts and solidarity of the Socialist International and of its member parties worldwide are with the people and government of Mozambique where its member party Frelimo is in office, and with the neighbouring countries affected as they seek to rebuild their cities, homes and lives and to cope with the aftermath of the human tragedy and loss of life. We call on the international community to offer all necessary aid to the governments of these countries as

they seek to ensure the swift delivery of humanitarian assistance to the areas hit by this disaster, to save lives and provide shelter, access to drinking water and medical assistance.

Extreme weather events such as Cyclone Idai have in recent times become both more common and more severe, which scientists have long warned would be a consequence of changes to the climate resulting from global carbon emissions. In the majority of cases, those who are most at risk from climate change and climate-related natural disasters and who are least able to deal with their consequences, are those who have historically contributed very little to the global emissions. To redress these imbalances, the Socialist International will continue to place global climate justice at the heart of its efforts to build a sustainable world society.

The world social democratic movement demands the release of Roberto Marrero in Venezuela

21 March 2019



Roberto Marrero addressing the last Congress of the Socialist International held in Cartagena, Colombia.

On the 21st of March at two in the morning, police and intelligence agents of the Venezuelan regime broke into and vandalised the home of Roberto Marrero in Caracas and took him away by force. Marrero, of Voluntad Popular, a member party of the Socialist International, is the head of the office of the President of the National Assembly, Juan Guaidó, recognised as the interim president of Venezuela by a large number of countries worldwide. The agents, as reported by Sergio Vergara, a member of the National Assembly of Venezuela and a neighbour of Marrero, left in Marrero's house two machine guns and a hand grenade, and subsequently accused him of being a terrorist.

It is crucial that the international community react strongly to this assault, detention and the false accusations by Maduro's regime against the person who is the closest collaborator of Juan Guaidó, demanding his immediate release.

Above, Roberto Marrero addressing the last Congress of the Socialist International held in Cartagena, Colombia.

President Trump's decision on the Golan Heights

27 March 2019

US President Donald Trump has signed a presidential proclamation recognising the Golan Heights as Israeli territory. This decision is contrary to fundamental principles of international law and to specific resolutions adopted by the UN Security Council on the Middle East,

emphasising the “inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by war and the need to work for a just and lasting peace in which every State in the area can live in security”.

The Socialist International will continue to be engaged in fully supporting the two-State solution for Israel and Palestine living side by side in peace and security, as we are equally committed to contributing to a future of peace, democracy and freedom for the people of Syria.

SI Secretary General in Rome for PSI Congress

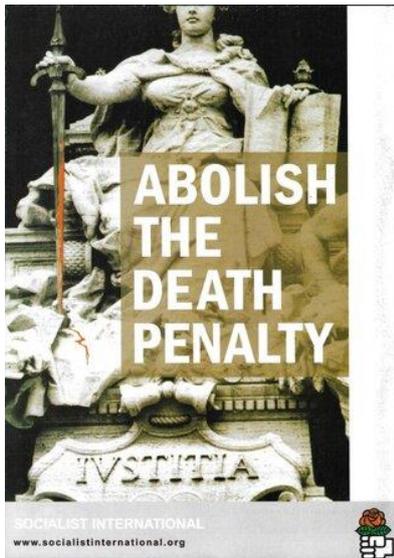
29 March 2019



SI Secretary General, Luis Ayala, with outgoing PSI Secretary, Senator Riccardo Nencini, and SI Vice-President, Pia Locatelli



SI Secretary General, Luis Ayala, with new PSI Secretary, Enzo Marai (on his right), SI Vice-President Pia Locatelli, and a group of delegates to the Congress



In reference to Brunei and 54 other countries

April 2019

The Socialist International is deeply alarmed by the introduction by Brunei of draconian laws that include death by stoning and other drastic punishments in a new penal code recently introduced.

Our International has been resolutely opposed for years to the death penalty in all circumstances, and reiterates its previous calls for its abolition by all countries, in line with our longstanding campaigns on this issue.

Other draconian punishments that form part of the new penal code in Brunei, such as the amputation of a hand or a foot for theft, are cruel and inhumane, and also have no place in the legal system of any country.

The SI encourages international organisations, governments and private citizens from around the world to call on Brunei and the 54 other countries who retain the death penalty to abolish it.

SI Meeting at the 140th IPU Assembly in Doha

7 April 2019



During the 140th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) which took place in Doha, Qatar, from 6 to 10 April, the Socialist International held its meeting of parliamentarians from SI member parties attending the Assembly.

The meeting was chaired by the SI Secretary General and included the participation of speakers of parliament, deputy speakers, senators, members of parliament and other representatives, from Albania, Angola, Argentina, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Chile, Costa Rica, Ghana, Mali, Mexico, Mongolia, Namibia, Nepal, Niger, Pakistan, Palestine, Portugal, San Marino, United

Kingdom, Uruguay, Venezuela, and representatives of the Global Fund and of the IPU's group for Latin America and the Caribbean.

Participants shared valuable information on the current situation, priorities and challenges in their respective countries and parliaments. The meeting's discussions also included exchanges on the emergency items that were due to be voted on by the Assembly.

A recurrent theme in the discussions was the devastating consequences of the cyclone Idai that had hit south-eastern Africa, affecting millions of people across Mozambique, Malawi and Zimbabwe, as well as the projected long term recovery, which desperately needed international help. While it was noted that there was much support in the Assembly in favour of the emergency item on this subject, it was pointed out that this was above all a humanitarian emergency. The other emergency item presented was "Ensuring international protection for the Palestinian people, rejecting Israeli authority over the occupied Golan Heights, promoting the values of peaceful coexistence among people and religions and combatting all forms of racism and intolerance". The situation of the Palestinian people also counted with widespread sympathy and concern along with calls for the urgent need to give renewed impetus to the drive for a two-state solution which, as pointed out by the SI Secretary General, was a fundamental policy of the Socialist International.

The question of equal participation of women in office was highlighted by a number of participants, with various delegations reporting on the improved percentages in their countries. In the case of Mexico, for instance, as a result of electoral reform, it was noted that for the first time the country enjoyed in effect parity in both houses. Attention was also brought to the increasing youth representation in politics.

Terrorism and violent extremism was a current serious challenge affecting many countries around the world, combined with trafficking, ethnic conflicts, and in some cases the systematic killing of women, children and the elderly. It was reported that Pakistan suffered the highest casualty rate in terms of civilian population and armed forces killed in action against terrorism. In the case of Venezuela, violence from criminal gangs run by the government persisted, detaining citizens for protesting against the regime, and the meeting heard how opposition forces in Albania were using violence as a tactic replacing normal political discourse.

The dire humanitarian, political and social crisis that prevailed in Venezuela, coupled with the high corruption rate among officials of the government, was a subject of grave concern. It was noted that members of the announced delegation to this IPU Assembly had been detained at the airport on departure, forbidden from leaving the country and had their passports removed, in violation of their immunity. The meeting heard from parliamentarians of two SI member parties, one from Voluntad Popular who managed to get to this Assembly only because she was now exiled in Colombia having been persecuted by the regime, and the other from Acción Democrática who had left the country not via the airport but by walking across the border. The Venezuelan representatives underlined the constitutionality of the actions of Guaidó, based on a constitution created by Hugo Chavez himself, and reiterated calls for the release of all the political prisoners. As Venezuelans, the representatives said they were aware that the solution for Venezuela lay in their hands, and in that quest they counted on the support of the Socialist International family.

The need for all SI member parties and organisations to reinforce and reassert their social democratic ideological and political commitments in dealing with world issues was stressed. It was pointed out that in the case of Europe, the challenge now was the composition of the next European Parliament and to what extent the anti-Europe, anti-migration, extremist forces, would prevail. In the face of the increasing nationalism and populism, it was further emphasised that the true meaning of socialism needed to be reiterated in order to win back the

electorate and to adequately address the issues that made people feel disenfranchised. True socialism was freedom, democracy, social justice and rights, and today more than ever, it was necessary for all to work together to ensure that our common values prevail.

Istanbul: SI calls for respect for the democratic process

11 April 2019

The initial result of the mayoral election in Istanbul, held on 31 March, has been upheld despite a series of recounts that have taken place in the days since the ballot, and the Socialist International congratulates Ekrem İmamoğlu, the candidate of its member party, CHP, on his victory. The attempts since the election by the ruling Justice and Development party (AKP) to overturn the result have failed and the election board has denied requests for a full recount. It is time for the outcome to be respected by all parties, and calls for a new election to cease.

At a time of great social and economic challenges for Turkey, the country needs its leaders to focus on delivering economic stability and good governance for the citizens. These efforts by the AKP to delegitimise the election result have the potential to increase volatility and damage social cohesion in Istanbul and more widely across Turkey. It also contributes to an erosion of trust in the democratic process and sets a dangerous precedent for the non-recognition of the results of any similarly close-run elections in the future.

A functioning democracy requires that defeated candidates and parties respect election results, and that the possibility exists for political alternance via the ballot box. After seventeen years in power in Istanbul, the AKP must now recognise the victory of Ekrem İmamoğlu and allow him to become the mayor of the whole of Istanbul and its citizens. The SI wishes the mayor-elect every success in his new role.

A call for urgent action in two continents

13 April 2019

For many years and in every continent, social democrats have been in the forefront of the struggle for democracy. Member parties of the Socialist International in great numbers have led the way to gain freedoms and rights for their citizens in many countries around the world. That struggle still continues every day, where dictators persist, where repression continues, and where members of our global social democratic community still find themselves under authoritarian regimes. In only this week, we have two clear examples, in two different continents, of the struggle that persists, inspired and led by members of our political family.

Mikalai Statkevich, leader of the SI member party Narodnaya Hramada (NH) of Belarus, has once again been imprisoned by the regime of Alexander Lukashenko. Statkevich, co-chair of the SI's regional committee for the Caucasus, CIS and the Black Sea, was sentenced on 9 April to fifteen days in jail following his call on social media to pray for the innocent victims of Stalin's repression. Lukashenko had ordered the removal of the wooden crosses at the memorial site at Kurapaty where the graves lie of over 30,000 people killed in the 1930s and 1940s during the rule of Stalin. Statkevich, who was a presidential candidate in the elections of 2010, was jailed for more than five years following the massive popular protests at the declaration of victory by Lukashenko in those elections, and is today a leading figure of the opposition and a presidential candidate for the forthcoming elections in 2020.

Andrés Esono Ondo, Secretary General of the SI member party in Equatorial Guinea, the Convergence for Social Democracy (CPDS), was arrested in Chad on the night of 11 April and is

being held in detention by the Chadian National Security Agency in the capital, N'Djamena. Esono Ondo had travelled to the city of Mongo in Chad to attend, as one of the international guests, the congress of the SI member, the Union Nationale pour le Développement et le Renouveau (UNDR), which was ultimately prevented from taking place by the regional authorities. The Department of External Security of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea published a press release dated 12 April 2019, outrageously claiming that the purpose of Esono Ondo's trip was to acquire arms, munitions and recruit terrorists to carry out a coup d'état in Equatorial Guinea with foreign financing, and that the leader of the UNDR, Saleh Kebzabo, was the facilitator in Chad of this plan.

Social democratic leaders, in the face of authoritarianism, have become the architects of new democracies and everyone who has been part of the struggle can recognise and knows the language, the methods and the arguments that belong to the past. We must all stand with our comrades in Belarus, Equatorial Guinea and Chad, as well as those in every other country suffering under authoritarian regimes, and play our part so that they can bring a democratic future to their countries.



Election win for SDP Finland

16 April 2019

In the parliamentary elections held in Finland on 14 April, the SI member, the Social Democratic Party, emerged with the majority of votes and the largest number of elected members of parliament, thus giving it a mandate to form a coalition government. SDP leader Antti Rinne will start negotiations with other political forces represented in the new parliament with a view to building a majority coalition, opening the way for the country to have its first social democratic prime minister since 2003.

The Socialist International Secretary General was invited to join the SDP on election day and accompanied Finnish comrades as they awaited the outcome of the vote.



The SI Secretary General with SDP leader Antti Rinne following the announcement of the election results



SI Vice-President Eero Heinäluoma (center) with newly elected member of parliament Eveliina Heinäluoma (left) and the SI Secretary General Luis Ayala (right)



Tarja Halonen, SI Honorary President and former President of Finland with the SI Secretary General

Socialist International mourns terror victims in Sri Lanka

22 April 2019



The Socialist International condemns the appalling coordinated attacks on Sunday 21 April in Sri Lanka, which targeted Christians worshipping at Easter Sunday church services and a number of hotels in the capital city Colombo. The loss of over 250 innocent lives in the space of a few short hours makes this one of the most deadly terrorist attacks in recent years. The Socialist International and its member parties offer their heartfelt sympathies and condolences to all those affected by the attacks, and extend their best wishes for recovery to those injured, many of whom continue to fight for their lives.

The International stands in full solidarity with the people of Sri Lanka as they try to come to terms with this senseless loss of life. It is essential that

members of the Christian community, in Sri Lanka as in all countries of the world, are free to practise their religion without fear of violence, and the SI once more emphasises its unwavering commitment to defeating all forms of religious intolerance, extremism and terror in order that people of all faiths and none around the world are safe to freely express their beliefs.

Those responsible for planning, supporting and carrying out this act of terrorism represent a violent and murderous ideology that is diametrically opposed to the most fundamental values of humanity. They must be held accountable for their actions and brought to justice, and the Socialist International calls upon the entire international community to work together for a comprehensive and coordinated response in order to eliminate the scourge of terrorism.

Release of Mikalai Statkevich and Andrés Esono Ondo

25 April 2019

The SI welcomes the release of two political prisoners, Andrés Esono Ondo, Secretary General of the CPDS of Equatorial Guinea and Mikalai Statkevich, leader of the NH of Belarus, about whom the SI had issued a press statement on 13 April.

Esono Ondo, who was arrested in Chad on 11 April in coordination with the Obiang regime in Equatorial Guinea, was released yesterday by the Chadian authorities and has today arrived back safely to Malabo. International mobilisation in his defence has been an important factor in his release and the SI will continue to be on alert.

Mikalai Statkevich has been released after serving a prison sentence of 15 days imposed by the Lukashenko regime, and is now also safely home. Having previously served a five year prison sentence, Statkevich, who is a presidential candidate for the 2020 elections, is regularly subjected to sudden disappearance, detention and imprisonment.

In our global political family we stand together in solidarity, determined to remain alert and on guard on all fronts, in support of our members who are victims of political persecution in countries where there is no democracy.

Advancing social democracy and initiatives to end political unrest in Haiti

26-27 April 2019



The SI Secretary General with the leadership of Fusion des Sociaux-Démocrates

Congress of the Rassemblement Social-Démocrate pour le Progrès d'Haïti (RSD)



The SI Secretary General with members of the Rassemblement Social-Démocrate pour le Progrès d'Haïti (RSD)

During the 26 and 27 of April, the SI Secretary General was in Port-au-Prince, participating in meetings with the two Haitian member parties of the Socialist International, the Fusion des Sociaux-Démocrates Haïtiens and the Rassemblement Social-Démocrate pour le Progrès d' Haïti (RSD).

Meetings were held with the leadership of both SI parties. The discussions included exchanges on the work and perspectives of each party, as well as on the grave national political situation in the country which in the last few months has seen a serious deterioration in the relations between the government and the parties of the opposition and violent street protests that had resulted in numerous casualties.

The Secretary General equally took part in the Congress of the RSD that was being held that weekend in Port-au-Prince, to which he delivered an address at its opening. In line with the outcome of the discussions with the two parties on the situation in the country, and on their advice, the SI Secretary





The SI Secretary General with H.E. Jovenel Moïse, President of the Republic of Haiti

General also held an extensive meeting with H.E. Jovenel Moïse, President of the Republic of Haiti. The internal situation in the country was discussed and exchanges were held with regard to initiatives to end the ongoing political unrest in Haiti. The Secretary General promoted the idea of a national political dialogue involving the government and all the opposition forces that were willing to engage in it, in order to advance solutions that would allow a normalisation of the situation, expressing the willingness of the organisation to help in this effort. Such dialogue would also facilitate advancing with the strengthening of the institutions which were crucial to consolidate and reinforce the democratic political system. President Moïse was very open to these ideas and it was agreed that contact would be maintained for the necessary follow up.

Socialists win in Spain

29 April 2019



“We made it happen!” said Pedro Sánchez to party members gathered in the PSOE headquarters after the election results were known last night.

The victory of Pedro Sánchez and the PSOE in Spain is an important moment for the political family of the Socialist International and for social democracy.

The Spanish socialists have won these elections, their first in over ten years, with a strong commitment to social democratic values, as Sánchez pointed out, to social justice, to the fight against inequality, to coexistence, and to clean politics by ending corruption.

The high level of turn out, over 75% of the electorate, adds to the victory and is a positive reflection of the democracy that has reigned in Spain for forty years.

Under the leadership of Pedro Sánchez, the PSOE's unwavering commitment and adherence to the fundamental values and principles of democratic socialism has been a key element in their electoral success.

In these times of multiple challenges, with the rise of nationalism, populism and discrimination, this victory is a victory for social democrats everywhere and a particular source of encouragement for those in Europe.

The Socialist International Secretary General was together with the comrades from the PSOE on election night.



Pedro Sánchez, President of the Government of Spain, Secretary General of the PSOE and vice-president of the SI, with Luis Ayala, SI Secretary General

Election victory in Panama

7 May 2019



The SI Secretary General was pleased to join our comrades in Panama for the elections.

The Socialist International warmly congratulates President-elect Laurentino 'Nito' Cortizo and the SI member Democratic Revolutionary Party (PRD), on their election success in Panama, having won the presidency and the majority in the National Assembly. The inauguration of the new president will take place on 1 July.



President-elect Laurentino 'Nito' Cortizo with the SI Secretary General

The National Assembly, the only legitimate institution of the Venezuelan State, under authoritarian assault

15 May 2019



The National Assembly, the Venezuelan Parliament, whose members were elected on 6 December 2015 and assumed their functions on 6 January 2016 for a term of five years in an electoral process that included the participation of all political forces, from the government as well as from the opposition, remains today the only legitimate political institution in the country resulting from a democratic process in accordance with the Constitution. The establishment of the other Venezuelan State powers, the executive and the judiciary, ended up with their legitimacy compromised from the very beginning, due to their disregard of key dispositions in the Venezuelan Constitution as well as the basic norms of any democratic electoral process.

In the case of the presidential election at the end of Nicolás Maduro's term in office, which should have taken place in December 2018 and announced six months in advance, it was initially brought forward to the month of April and then to the month of May of that year, and then was finally held at one and a half months' notice. The election was convened by a constituent assembly and not by the National Electoral Council as established in the Venezuelan Constitution. This constituent assembly, which was created by a decree of Nicolás Maduro instead of, as stated in the Constitution, by consulting the Venezuelan people in a referendum, has been composed from its very beginnings exclusively by members of the ruling party who have conferred on themselves the right to adopt decisions on all types of issues, among them those that fall within the competence and remit of the legitimate National Assembly.

In the actual election of the president of the republic on 20 May 2018, the main forces of the opposition did not register any candidates, protesting against the absence of guarantees and the lack of legitimacy of the electoral process, the lack of neutrality of the body governing the elections, the National Electoral Council, the disqualification of opposition candidates and the absence of others who were at the time political prisoners and prevented from taking part. Ultimately, the candidates that took part in that election were only the outgoing president, Nicolás Maduro, and two other candidates not belonging to the majority parties represented in the National Assembly. The total electoral participation was registered as the lowest in the history of the electoral processes in the country.

With regard to the composition of the Supreme Court of Justice in the days immediately prior to the new members of the National Assembly taking office, the outgoing members proceeded to act within three days and with a disregard for the norms established in the Constitution,

appointing sixteen new judges, a task which corresponded to the newly elected majority, whose job it was to work on and decide these new appointments. This led to the extremes of appointing outgoing deputies of the National Assembly belonging to the ruling party, as members of the Supreme Court of Justice. This fact has remained in the consciousness of the Venezuelan democrats and of all those who, with loyalty and respect for justice, observe and follow with consternation the decisions of this Court.

Within this context and faced with the complex reality of the political, humanitarian and economic crisis that Venezuela encounters, the persecution, imprisonment, exile or the lifting of the immunity of parliamentarians at the National Assembly, the only legitimate body of the State structure in that country, by other powers whose legitimacy is not only compromised from its beginnings but also violate once again the Constitution that clearly and transparently states that it is the National Assembly that is the body that must determine, by means of a qualified majority, if the parliamentary immunity of any of its members is to be lifted.

The Socialist International, composed of political parties in government or in opposition in most of the world's democracies and parliaments, rejects and firmly condemns the assault on the freedom and integrity of the National Assembly of Venezuela and of its members that has been taking place these last years, months, weeks and days, and which affects this institution and today personally, 31 parliamentarians members of the Assembly.

Our International, today once again demands the freedom and the respect for the right to serve in the exercise of their functions of all the parliamentarians in prison, in exile, suffering persecution, and whose parliamentary immunity is not being respected.

Members of the National Assembly who today have their immunity lifted or removed, are in prison, persecuted or under the protection of foreign embassies in Caracas or forced into exile:

1. Juan Guaidó, President of the Assembly	Immunity lifted
2. Edgar Zambrano, First Vice-President of the Assembly	In prison
3. Adriana D'Elia	Exiled
4. Américo De Grazia	Embassy of Italy
5. Dinorah Figuera	Exiled
6. Freddy Guevara	Embassy of Chile
7. Freddy Superlano	Immunity lifted
8. Gaby Arellano	Exiled
9. Germán Ferrer	Exiled
10. Henry Ramos	Immunity lifted
11. Hugo Carvajal	Exiled
12. Ismael García	Exiled
13. José Olivares	Exiled
14. Simón Calzadilla	Immunity lifted
15. Juan Requesens	In prison
16. Julio Borges	Exiled
17. Luis Florido	Exiled
18. Mariela Magallanes	Embassy of Italy
19. Richard Blanco	Embassy of Argentina
20. Sergio Vergara	Immunity lifted
21. Rosmit Mantilla	Exiled
22. Gilber Caro	In prison
23. Miguel Pizarro	Immunity lifted

24. Juan Andrés Mejía	Immunity lifted
25. Franco Casella	Embassy of Italy
26. Carlos Paparoni	Immunity lifted
27. Winston Flores	Immunity lifted
28. Sonia Medina	Exiled
29. Eudoro González	Exiled
30. Milagros Valero	Exiled
31. Ramón López	Exiled

SI SG in Finland during EU Elections

28 May 2019



Sosialidemokraattisten puolueiden kansainvälisen yhteistyöjärjestön Sosialistisen internationaalin pääsihteeri, chileläinen **Luis Ayala** vieraili Suomessa seuraamassa europarlamenttivaalien tulosiltaa.

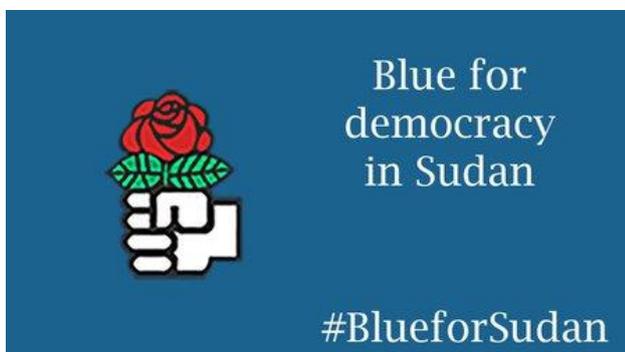
Demokraatti, 28 May 2019

Chilean SI Secretary General, Luis Ayala, on the Euro election results
“People continue to trust and believe in the European project”

Luis Ayala, the Chilean Secretary General of the Socialist International, the international organization for social democratic parties, visited Finland to follow the outcome of the European Parliament elections.

Civilian rule and democracy for Sudan

14 June 2019



The legitimate demands of the Sudanese people for the immediate implementation of civilian rule must be met without delay.

Massive popular protests brought an end to the dictatorship of Bashir, however rather than heralding a transition to civilian democratic rule as had been the hope of the Sudanese people, it has instead led to the iron-fist rule of a Transitional Military Council which is directly responsible for the brutal massacre of over 100

protesters, hundreds more injured, and according to reports from recognised human rights organisations, for the detention, torture and rape of scores of others, atrocities that have included the killing of children.

We in the Socialist International condemn the despicable brutality in Sudan without reservation, and call for those responsible for these gross violations of human rights and all standards of human decency to be held to account for their crimes, which must be fully investigated by an independent and accountable body. This violence against civilians has led the African Union to suspend Sudan from membership, a decision which we applauded.

The international community has the moral responsibility of acting to stop the suffering of the Sudanese people who after many years of repression by the previous dictatorship, today continue to be victims of violence and human rights abuses by the existing military regime.

The SI expresses its full solidarity with all those in Sudan working to bring positive change to the country and build a better future free from dictatorship, oppression, poverty and suffering.

A peaceful and orderly transition to civilian government is the only acceptable way forward for the Sudanese people, a demand which we wholeheartedly support.

The civilian democratic forces in Sudan will need support and assistance from the entire international community in order to realise these ambitions. Our International stands firmly with the people of Sudan in their efforts and sacrifice to win the struggle for their freedoms and rights.

#BlueforSudan

Istanbul: SI renews calls for respect for democracy

21 June 2019

As the citizens of Istanbul prepare to go back to the polls this Sunday for a rerun of the mayoral elections originally held on 31 March, the Socialist International renews its calls for full respect for democracy and for the citizens' voice to be heard.

The cancellation of the previous elections based on a technicality and the consequent annulment of the results by the Supreme Electoral Council under pressure from the governing AKP party and the head of state, was, in the eyes of most observers, unjustified and contributed, as the SI has previously stated, to an erosion of trust in the democratic process, setting a dangerous precedent.

Recent poll projections suggest that the candidate from the CHP, Ekrem İmamoğlu, would equally win this rerun of the vote. Democracy is crucial to social stability, as it is to guaranteeing the rights and freedoms of the people. The Socialist International stands firmly alongside all democrats in Turkey and stresses the importance of the world's attention on Istanbul this weekend.



SI at the funeral of Ousmane Tanor Dieng

17 July 2019

On Monday, 15 July 2019, our dear comrade Ousmane Tanor Dieng, Leader of the Socialist Party of Senegal and a Vice-President of the Socialist International, sadly passed away following an illness. The Socialist International deeply

mourns his loss and pays homage to his lifelong dedication to his country, his people, his party, and to his active commitment to the Socialist International where he served as a Vice-President from 1996 until his death, and as chair of the SI Africa Committee from 1996 to 2013.



Arrival of the remains of the late Ousmane Tanor Dieng to the airport of Dakar with military honours



SI Secretary General greeting and transmitting SI condolences to H.E. the President of Senegal, Macky Sall



Standing in honour of the late Ousmane Tanor Dieng at Dakar airport

SI meeting on the two-state solution, Israel and Palestine, for peace and a future of opportunities for the people of the Middle East

Ramallah 30 July – Tel Aviv 31 July 2019



In line with the longstanding commitment of the Socialist International to peace in the Middle East and its decision to reinforce efforts in support of the two-state solution for Israel and Palestine to live side by side as two sovereign states, the Socialist International held a two-day meeting with a session in Ramallah on 30 July and a session in Tel Aviv on the 31st.

At this crucial time for the people of the region, in a challenging global and regional context, and responding to the need to exchange views, set priorities and define a common path in favour of peace, democracy and opportunities for all in the region, the meeting brought together representatives from SI member parties in Israel and Palestine along with leaders and representatives of a number of SI member parties from other countries.

At the opening of the meeting in Ramallah, on behalf of the Palestinian hosts, Fatah's Commissioner General for International Relations, Rawhi Fattouh, conveyed the fraternal greetings of the Palestinian member parties and thanks to the SI for this initiative and to all participants for their presence.

The SI Secretary General Luis Ayala, who chaired the meeting, outlined the longstanding commitment and role of the Socialist International in efforts to secure a peaceful and just outcome to the conflict, always with the objective of attaining a two-state solution for Israel and Palestine, for the benefit of both peoples. The question of Palestine was a global issue, not only a regional one, he said, and our mission was to build on what the International had been able to contribute in line with our principles and values in order to achieve a just and stable peace and the implementation of and respect for international norms and agreements.

During the opening session, the Palestinian Prime Minister, Mohammad Shtayyeh, welcomed the participants and addressed the current situation between Israel and Palestine, pointing out that Benjamin Netanyahu was not a true partner for peace. The Palestinian leader was also critical of the treatment of the Trump government towards the Palestinian people, including his decision to recognise Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and the withdrawal of financial resources such as to the UNRWA. He called on the SI to support the Palestinians in their efforts to recover their occupied territories and to support the initiative of President Abbas for the convening of an international peace conference on the Middle East.

The discussions in Ramallah, which counted with both of the SI Vice-Presidents from the region, Nabil Shaath from Palestine and Colette Avital from Israel among the participants, included diverse and extensive contributions, centring on the current regional reality and ways to promote and advance the two-state solution, providing elements that were included in a final statement of the meeting agreed by consensus by both the Palestinian and Israeli members together with all delegates to the meeting.

Following the first day's session, His Excellency President Mahmoud Abbas received participants at the venue of the Presidency.

The second day's session opened in Tel Aviv with the participation of the newly elected leader of Meretz, Nitzan Horowitz, who also heads the recently formed Democratic Union which brings together other sectors and personalities of the left in Israel for contesting the forthcoming elections in September. The leader and head of the list of this new formation briefed the meeting on the creation of this new alliance of the left, on the current political scene, and the challenges ahead for his party and for the left in Israel.

Much of the discussions in Tel Aviv focussed on the situation in Israel ahead of the forthcoming elections, on the perspectives for a two-state solution that would bring peace, and on alternative ways of including civil society and others in these endeavours. On this occasion, for the first time, an Arab Israeli organisation, the Arab Movement for Change, was formally invited to join the debates.

Participants agreed on the importance of increasing international recognition of the State of Palestine and the need to encourage SI member parties worldwide, and particularly those in government who have not already done so, to take the decision to move forward with this recognition. In this regard, it was also agreed that a date would be determined by the organisation for SI members to move jointly internationally on this question in their respective countries and national parliaments.

The content of the exchanges over the two days in Ramallah and Tel Aviv brought forward and highlighted elements for a common position which is reflected in a statement discussed and approved by consensus in both cities.

STATEMENT

The two-state solution, Israel and Palestine, for peace and a future of opportunities for the people of the Middle East *Ramallah 30 July – Tel Aviv 31 July, 2019*

The Socialist International held a meeting in Ramallah, Palestine, on 30 July and in Tel Aviv, Israel, on 31 July 2019 to discuss the theme of the two-state solution, Israel and Palestine, for peace and a future of opportunities for the people of the Middle East.

After more than 27 years of failing to achieve peace through the bilateral peace process, SI believes that the time has come for the international community to collectively meet its responsibility under international law to bring an end to the occupation of the Palestinian State and all impediments to the exercise by the Palestinian people of their right to self-determination.

Regretfully, this fundamental foundation for any future peace agreement in the region has been openly opposed and sabotaged by the US Administration under President Donald Trump, in a manner that creates an alliance between the Trump Administration and extremists within Israel, including settlers, that work actively against the inalienable Palestinian right to self-determination. The meetings in Ramallah and Tel Aviv were held with the goal of analyzing the implications of such absence and what course of action the international community needs to take in order to safeguard the implementation of the long overdue inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and the two-state solution, which is in the interest of Israelis, Palestinians and of regional and world peace.

With reference to the Councils held in Geneva 26-27 June 2018 and Santo Domingo 28-29 January 2019, the meeting reiterates its commitment to the following:

1. Reaffirms the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, including the right to their independent State of Palestine on the 4th of June 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital, and calls on all States for immediate and unconditional recognition of the State of Palestine. The SI reaffirms its commitment, in accordance with international law, to bringing a complete end to the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian state that started in 1967 in order to achieve the two-state solution, as two sovereign and democratic states for all their citizens and a just solution to the issue of Palestinian refugees according to the UN resolution 194 stipulated by the Arab peace initiative.
2. Reaffirms the relevant resolutions concerning the Palestinian Israeli conflict including resolutions 181(1947), 242 (1967), 338 (1973), 446 (1979), 452 (1979), 465 (1980), 476 (1980), 478 (1980), 1397 (2002), 1515 (2003), 67/19 (2012), 2334 (2016) and 1850 (2008).
3. The SI stands against the US Administration's positions against Just peace. The SI condemns moving the US embassy to Jerusalem and the recognition of the illegal annexation of the Golan Heights, both of which violated International law and the traditional policy of the previous American administrations and encouraged the extreme agenda of the Israeli Government. All these steps are dangerous precedents for the international community as a whole, as the US Government is trying to legitimize the acquisition of land through the use of force, a grave violation of international law.
4. The SI considers the US Administration's so called "deal of the century" for Israel and Palestine as an intention to legitimize the unlawful Israeli acts in the occupied Palestinian and Arab Territories, to formulate a deal that violates the most basic requirements for a just and sustainable solution, and ignores international law and human rights standards. It also contradicts the global consensus on peace, and destroys the legitimate rights of the Palestinian refugees and any ability of a two-state solution in which Palestinians will have their sovereign state as part of a peace accord.
5. The SI rejects any efforts that try to substitute real and just peace with "illusion of economic prosperity" which sustains occupation of the Palestinian State and the racial discriminatory policies against the Palestinian people. Such efforts and events like Manama Workshop deny the Palestinians' inalienable right to self-determination and sovereignty, and undermines international legitimacy and the real requirements of peace and true economic development.
6. The SI strongly condemns the latest illegal measures taken by the Israeli Authorities against the land and the people of Palestine, including the recent demolition of dozens of houses in the village of Sur Baher near East Jerusalem.
7. Stands against all measures aimed at altering the demographic composition, character and status of the Palestinian Territory occupied since 1967, including East Jerusalem, including, inter alia, the construction and expansion of settlements, the building of the separation wall, the transfer of Israeli settlers, confiscation of land, demolition of homes and displacement of Palestinian civilians, in violation of international humanitarian law and relevant resolutions.
8. Encourages the non-violent approach at all levels and by all parties and demands the immediate cessation of all forms of violence by the Israeli occupying power and settlers against the Palestinian non-violent resistance.

9. Calls upon the international community, and particularly those governments and parliaments with representation of SI parties, to take concrete measures against Israeli settlements, including banning Israeli settlement products, issuing guidelines to prevent foreign support of Israeli settlements and making a comprehensive review of all agreements with Israel in order not to allow Israeli settlements to benefit from those agreements. Such actions should move in the direction of implementing UN Security Council Resolution 2334 which calls for a differentiation between Israel and the occupied territory, preventing Israeli settlers from enjoying the benefits of other Israeli citizens from international agreements. Settlements remain the main obstacle to fulfilling the Palestinian right to self-determination.
10. Stands against any resolution that criminalizes freedom of expression and actions, including equating anti-occupation campaigns with anti-Semitism, instead SI calls upon all countries to take actions to hold Israel accountable for its well documented violations of International Law and the systematic denial of the Palestinians rights.
11. Demands the immediate release of all Palestinian prisoners especially the elected members of the Palestinian Legislative Council, minors and administrative detainees. SI calls for the release of Fatah leaders Marwan Barghouti, Karim Younesm, Fuad al Shobaky as well as the leader of the PFLP Ahmad Saadat and other political leaders.
12. Since the SI's last statement the number of Palestinian civilians attacked by Israeli Occupation Forces has risen sharply with the killing of over 200 unarmed Palestinians and injuring of over 9,000 including children, journalists, first-aid paramedics, women and men. The SI strongly condemns the illegal blockade of the Gaza Strip by Israel, as well as the use of fire arms against innocent civilians on both sides, and calls on the Israeli Government to immediately lift the siege on the Gaza Strip and allow the free movement of the people. The SI affirms its support to the United Nations General Assembly resolution (A/ES-10/L.23) that calls for "guaranteeing the safety and protection of the Palestinian civilian population in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in the West Bank and Gaza Strip".
13. The SI welcomes president Mahmoud Abbas' initiative presented at the UN Security Council on 20 February 2018, in which he calls for a multilateral peace conference for the Middle East Peace Process based on International law and relevant UN resolutions and signed agreements between the parties involved, with the aim of devising mechanisms for implementing the relevant resolutions of all aspects of the conflict.
14. The SI calls on the United Nations to take concrete steps to protect the civilian population of Palestine and their property affected by grave violation of international humanitarian law and the IV Geneva Convention whether by the Israeli government or the Israeli settlers. It also calls on the UN Secretary General and the UN human Rights commissioner Ms. Michelle Bachelet to release the data base of all companies that benefit from their connection with the Israeli colonial settlements in the occupied Palestinian territory in accordance with UN Human Rights Council resolution 36/31 of March 2016. The SI regrets the US decision to withdraw from the Human Rights Council, as it did previously from the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and UNESCO.
15. The SI expresses its solidarity with the Palestinian citizens in Israel, who continue to live under a system of discrimination. It also strongly condemns the approval of anti-Arab laws that have racist nature, notably the Nation State Law. The SI meeting calls upon the State of Israel to abolish this and other discriminatory laws in order to ensure full equality to all Israeli citizens regardless of their race, color or religion. The SI reiterates its solidarity with the progressive forces in Israel and Palestine, including human rights defenders and civil society organizations including Btselem, Al Haq and Human Rights Watch that have been victims of a vicious campaign by the Israeli government.

Meeting of the SI Presidium and Heads of State & Government, United Nations, New York

25 September 2019



Members of the Socialist International Presidium have held their annual meeting at the Headquarters of the United Nations in New York, joined by Heads of State and government and ministers from our social democratic political family. The exchanges focused on key issues of concern on the global agenda being addressed during the high-level segment of the 74th UN General Assembly, including climate change, sustainable development, and challenges that require the efforts of the International in conflict resolution, peace and democracy.

The meeting opened with a tribute to two leading figures in the global social democratic movement who recently passed away. The Presidium remembered the life and work of Dolores Renau, who was president of SIW between 1999 and 2003, and Ousmane Tanor Dieng, leader of the Senegalese Socialist Party and a long-serving SI Vice-President, who had also chaired the SI Africa Committee.

The Presidium meeting came shortly after the Climate Action Summit convened by the UN Secretary-General on 23 September, and the contributions made underlined the extent to which socialist and social democratic parties continue to be at the forefront of global efforts to take all necessary steps to avert catastrophic climate change. In his opening remarks the SI President George Papandreou emphasised the role that the SI, as an international movement, has played on this issue. SI Secretary General Luis Ayala considered that the Climate Action Summit and the most recent report of the IPCC had given a deeper sense of urgency to the climate emergency the planet is facing. In regard to the forthcoming COP25, the SI will, as on previous occasions, bring together environment ministers from the social democratic family for exchanges and discussions on their priorities and expectations.

Representatives of SI member parties in government took the opportunity to outline their respective approaches on the climate emergency and the ambitious commitments that their countries had undertaken to achieve a carbon neutral society within the shortest possible time frame. Many underlined the importance of financial measures to incentivise investment in the green economy, in particular renewable energies, to ensure that targets for emissions reductions could be met.

A common theme of contributions was the priority that needed to be placed on the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2030, which are in complete alignment with the fundamental values and principles of the SI and its members. Pedro Sánchez, President of the government of Spain and SI Vice-President, called it a purely social democratic agenda and emphasised the need for a just and fair transition to a sustainable world society. A number of attendees felt that more work was needed to communicate the importance of the SDGs to citizens on a local level, and that it would benefit social democratic parties to underline their commitment to these goals which correlate with a future that many hundreds of millions of citizens across the world wish to see.

The need to strengthen political cooperation between social democratic parties to advance their shared values and principles was a key focus of remarks made by Viorica Dăncilă, Prime Minister of Romania. She considered that this was equally the case when fighting against the impact of climate change as when strengthening political cooperation. Another leader to highlight the value of cooperation was President Milo Djukanović of Montenegro, who spoke of the problems associated with the desire of some national leaders to reduce the importance of multilateralism. He was one of many speakers who underlined the importance of regional cooperation as a force for peace, stability and prosperity. Similar thoughts were expressed by Ralph Gonsalves, Prime Minister of St Vincent and the Grenadines, who regretted that regional organisations in the Caribbean were not playing as positive role as they once had, giving added significance to the work of the SI in the region.

The need for multilateralism in the face of global conflicts was a major theme of the discussions. Many speakers underlined the unique role that the Socialist International continues to play in promoting and facilitating dialogue in order to promote new approaches to unlocking progress in the resolution of seemingly intractable conflicts. This was very much in evidence at the recent meeting that the SI held over two days in Ramallah and Tel Aviv in July, which brought together representatives of Israeli and Palestinian member parties in both countries, reiterating that the only alternative for peace is a two-state solution. By engaging in dialogue with their counterparts in a spirit of cooperation, further progress was made to reach a common position on how this could be achieved.

Perspectives were also heard from those directly affected by conflict and instability in other regions of the world. This included an update on current efforts to reach a settlement in Cyprus based on a bizonal bicomunal federation following the collapse of talks coordinated under the auspices of the UN in 2017. The Presidium was informed of recent developments in the Kashmir region and highlighted the urgent need for the international community to bring both sides to the conflict together in dialogue. On Venezuela, the Presidium heard how stability was being affected by the absence of rights and freedoms, the lack of democracy, and the ongoing tragedy of the systematic violation of human rights and erosion of quality of life in the country.

The SI Secretary General gave an overview of the coming activities of the International, which would include meetings of the Council, regional committees, the committee on gender equality, and social democratic ministers at COP25 in Santiago.



The members of the SI Presidium that participated in the meeting were George Papandreou, SI President; Luis Ayala, SI Secretary General; SI Vice-Presidents Colette Avital (Israel), Victor Benoit (Haiti), Janira Hopffer Almada (Cape Verde), Carlos Lupi (Brazil), Shazia Marri (Pakistan), Mario Nalpatian (Armenia), Julião Mateus Paulo (Angola), Alexander Romanovich (Russia), Pedro Sánchez (President of the government of Spain), Nabil Shaath (Palestine) and Miguel Vargas

(Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Dominican Republic); SI Honorary Presidents Mustapha Ben Jaafar (Tunisia) and Tarja Halonen (former President of Finland). Among Heads of State, ministers and office holders were also President Milo Djukanović (Montenegro), Prime Minister Viorica Dăncilă (Romania), Prime Minister Ralph Gonsalves (St Vincent and the Grenadines), Turkish Cypriot leader Mustafa Akıncı, Kalla Ankourao (Minister of Foreign Affairs of Niger), Tomáš Petříček (Minister of Foreign Affairs of Czech Republic), Ville Skinnari (Minister for Development Cooperation and Foreign Trade of Finland), Eugen Orlando Teodorovici (Romanian Minister of Finance and Executive President of the PSD), Williams Dávila and Luis Florido (National Assembly, Venezuela) and officials of the governments of Burkina Faso and Mozambique.

Deep concern for stability and human rights in north-eastern Syria

9 October 2019

The SI is deeply concerned by the potential implications of unilateral Turkish military action in north-eastern Syria, which could have severe consequences for regional stability, human rights and the continuing fight against terrorism. Any escalation in fighting in the north east of Syria will mean further suffering and trauma, caused by increased violence and the potential displacement of hundreds of thousands of civilians living in the region. Humanitarian aid may be disrupted to those living in displaced people's camps, placing at most risk those who have already been forced to leave their homes and are dependent on this assistance.

The further destabilisation of the situation in Syria and potential revival of the terrorist group ISIS could be a grave consequence of any ill-considered military action in northern Syria. The premature withdrawal of coalition forces from north-eastern Syria leaves Kurdish and other forces in the region, who have spent several years on the front line of the fight against terrorism, vulnerable to a resurgence by ISIS.

The Socialist International reiterates its firm support for the Syrian Kurds, who have been on the frontline against terrorism in that country and have provided a hospitable environment for refugees and internally displaced persons. The international community must not abandon the Kurds in Syria and the Syrian Democratic Forces, 11,000 of whom have given their lives fighting ISIS.

The delicate situation in the north east of Syria requires restraint to be shown by all sides if an escalation in violence, increased bloodshed and a human rights disaster are to be avoided.



SI meeting at the 141st Assembly of the IPU in Belgrade, Serbia

14 October 2019

On 14 October 2019, the Socialist International held its regular meeting within the framework of the 141st Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, which on this occasion took place in Belgrade, Serbia. Chaired by the SI Secretary General, the meeting was attended by parliamentarians and representatives from Algeria, Angola,

Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Cyprus, Dominican Republic, Gambia, Ghana, Iraq, Mali, Mongolia, Montenegro, Niger, Pakistan, Palestine, Panama, Serbia, South Africa, Spain, United Kingdom, Venezuela and the Global Fund.

The meeting heard reports on the national situation of the different countries with updates on their latest political and social developments, and in some cases deficit of democracy. Contributions were made on issues of international concern including the climate emergency; the humanitarian and political crisis arising from the Turkish military incursion in Northern Syria; the crisis affecting Kashmir; the situation in the Sahel region; the ongoing unresolved question of Palestine with its repercussions for the wider Middle East, and the humanitarian and political crisis in Venezuela which also impacted other countries in the region with the steady exodus of large numbers of the population. Many participants underlined that securing and maintaining peace was the key to all progress, and it was a pre-requisite for development and democracy.

The SI Secretary General spoke of the views and activities of the Socialist International, highlighting its longstanding work for climate justice and for the sustainable development goals. He underlined the SI's commitment to achieving 50/50 in terms of gender parity and welcomed the increasing involvement of young people on crucial global issues, as we have seen with climate change.



SI Secretary General in Niger

28 October 2019

SI Secretary General meets with His Excellency Mahamadou Issoufou, President of Niger

“Women's Participation in Decision-Making Processes - the challenges for a 50/50 World”
Niamey, Niger
29-30 October 2019



Hosted by the SI member party in Niger, the PNDS-Tarayya, a Socialist International Women Africa Regional Meeting was held in Niamey on 29-30 October 2019. The opening session was addressed by four speakers: Hadizatou Ousseini, President of the PNDS-Tarayya Women’s Organisation; Ouafa Hajji, President of Socialist International Women; Luis Ayala, Secretary General of the Socialist International; and Mohamed Bazoum, President of the host party, PNDS.



In his speech, the SI Secretary General underlined that “women make up half of the population. For us socialists and social democrats, members of the Socialist International, our only path, consistent with our principles and values, is to engage and to play a leading role in ending inequality, injustice, violence against women, and to make our democracies true democracies through the equal integration of women in political, economic and social life”.

(L-R): Ouafa Hajji, Mohamed Bazoum, Luis Ayala and Hadizatou Ousseini

Meeting of the Socialist International Committee for the CIS, the Caucasus and the Black Sea, in Minsk, Belarus

8-9 November 2019



The SI Committee for the CIS, the Caucasus and the Black Sea held a two-day meeting in Minsk on 8-9 November 2019, hosted by the SI member party in Belarus, Narodnaya Gramada. The agenda of the meeting focused on the current priorities for social democratic parties in the region, incorporating reports and exchanges on the national situation faced by each of the member parties represented. Discussions continued on democracy and its institutions in the CIS, the Caucasus and Black Sea, overcoming conflicts and securing peace, and continuing to strengthen social democracy in the region. The meeting was chaired by Mikalai Statkevich (Belarus, Narodnaya Gramada), Araz Alizadeh (Azerbaijan, SDPA) and Alexandra Dobolyi (Hungary, MSzP), the co-chairs of the committee.

The meeting was addressed at its opening by Luis Ayala, SI Secretary General, who recalled the long commitment of the SI to Belarus and the engagement of its member party within the global social democratic political family. Noting that exactly thirty years had passed since the fall of the Berlin wall, he reiterated that social democracy had always been on the side of freedoms, rights and democratic change, and that social democratic parties now existed across the CIS, where they faced complex challenges. Progress towards democracy had not gone as expected in some regions of the world, including this one, making the vision of social democrats necessary in the absence of free and fair elections in a number of post-Soviet countries. Even within democratic systems, neoliberalism had exacerbated the difference between rich and poor, creating increasing inequality which in turn caused democracy to suffer.

Mikalai Statkevich, chair of the host party and co-chair of the committee, gave his warm greetings to all participants and his thanks to the SI and its members for their support and solidarity over many years during which he and his party had struggled for democratic rights and freedoms in Belarus. He described the situation in the country under an authoritarian

system where one person had been in power for 25 years, the parliament was merely decorative and elections rigged in favour of the ruling party, with a judicial system that was completely subordinate to the regime.

In preparation for the presidential election campaign of 2020, Narodnaya Gramada was fighting for the right of Mikalai Statkevich to be a candidate. Following his release in 2015, after more than four years as a political prisoner, his rights had been restricted for a further eight years, during which time he would be prohibited from participating in elections. As long as the dictator was allowed to appoint rivals for himself, society would be denied the change to get rid of him, but Statkevich nonetheless considered that dramatic changes were inevitable in Belarus, and the party was building up strength, with the support and solidarity of its friends around the world, to be in a position to make those changes positive for the country and its people.

The committee offered its wholehearted support to Statkevich and Narodnaya Gramada as they prepared for upcoming elections, confident that the forthcoming meeting of the SI Council would give its backing to their efforts, demanding that the coming electoral processes would be closer to being fair and democratic than in the past. The SI Secretary General said that the SI would make full use of its international profile and platform to draw the attention of the world to the lack of democracy, rights and freedoms in Belarus, to have a strong international presence in the country and mobilise international institutions to secure free and fair elections in Belarus in 2020.

Further perspectives on the lack of solidarity, freedom and justice in Belarus were heard on the second day of the meeting from trade unionist Gennady Fedynich, who reported on the pressures faced by members of his union. He had been prevented from attending the opening session of the meeting due to being under house arrest, a status that had been created by the government in order to claim that there were no political prisoners. He considered that the state had abandoned its people, and that urgent reforms were needed in pensions and salaries to raise living standards in the country.

The committee received a report from the delegation of the SDPK of Kyrgyzstan on recent developments in that country, where there had been a deterioration in the political situation following the detention of former president Almazbek Atambayev, with reports of arrests of many in the leadership of the party, physical beatings in prison and barriers to the activity of the party. The SDPK, having been the first party in the post-Soviet region to come to power from opposition, now continued to operate as an opposition party as there had been a move away from democracy and towards a clan-oriented politics in recent years.

In response to the political crisis in Kyrgyzstan, the committee decided that an SI delegation should travel to the country in the immediate future to hold dialogue with representatives of the government of Kyrgyzstan, the SDPK and former president Almazbek Atambayev in order to carry out a full assessment of the true situation in the country. The SI could not accept that one of its member parties be destroyed, and would be fully engaged, putting clear demands to the actors in the political process in Kyrgyzstan and mobilising the international community and institutions to give the political crisis there the attention it deserves.

On Azerbaijan, co-chair of the committee Araz Alizadeh reported that increases in the social budget and rises in the minimum wage were not enough. He considered that true democracy was far from being achieved in all countries of the CIS, where politicians had not been successful in finding the key to the hearts of their people. The SDPA would soon take part in municipal elections on a platform of trying to increase the rights of the municipal authorities. His view was that the country could see more progress if the problem of Nagorno-Karabakh was resolved.

In the short period since the previous committee meeting there had been significant changes in Armenia, where a wave of protests had taken place in April 2018. At parliamentary elections in December 2018, a new alliance had been elected with an unprecedented 70% of the vote, and for the first time the SI-member ARF-D was not represented in parliament. Nonetheless, the party continued to advocate for all reforms to be based on the constitution of Armenia, in order to ensure objectivity in the transition processes, and believed in the separation of powers in the country in favour of the establishment of real democracy.

Following the investiture of a new president in Kazakhstan in March 2019, the country was going through an awakening as people realised they have a will and a vote and could create change. As the only registered opposition party, the SI-member OSDP was working to bring about a change to the situation, with the majoritarian electoral system facing a crisis. Askhat Rakhimzhanov, the new chair of OSDP, reported on the changes that had taken place within the party and the challenges it had was currently facing.

Recent electoral processes in Russia had seen positive results for A Just Russia party in Moscow, St Petersburg and Sevastopol, with an increase in the number of regional deputies elected. The party was focusing its energies on the continuation of its parliamentary campaigning and actions to put pressure on the ruling party, with all parties in Russia currently getting ready for elections in 2020. The party was against the social injustice that had provoked the recent protests in Moscow, but had not taken part in the rallies organised by other opposition forces.

The recent changes in Ukraine were outlined in the context of the authoritarian regime the country had inherited upon independence and the move towards oligarchy in the 1990s, when power was conceded to businesses and the rich. The election of President Zelensky was truly unexpected and represented a victory for the people over the oligarchic system, but the overall state of affairs had yet to change with no improvement in the general situation in the country. One important reform that was needed was the elimination of the financial conditions imposed on political parties to participate in national campaigns, to enable access for all parties, including the SI-member SDPU.

The SI Secretary General reported that he had also been in contact with SI member parties in Georgia (SDD) and Moldova (PDM), who sent their greetings to the committee. In the case of Moldova, the political situation in the country was particularly complex with the scheduling of a crucial parliamentary session on the days of our meeting, therefore a representative of the PDM could not travel to Minsk.

Discussions on democracy in the region focused on the challenges still faced with establishing a truly democratic system more than two decades on from independence. During the exchanges, Alexandra Dobolyi (MSzP, Hungary, co-chair of the committee) noted that those in the west of Europe had started to see her country as an eastern dictatorship, while in the east it was considered a western democracy, highlighting the importance of placing the struggle for democracy across the region in the correct context. Although the level of democratisation varies from country to country, there are common challenges in the way the electoral process was often staged in order for those who hold power to maintain their grip.

Several interventions focused on the crucial role that democratic institutions have in face of a political system that is engineered to hinder the democratic transfer of power. Although the problems of countries of the former Soviet Union were not identical and elections organised differently, the lack of strong and independent institutions was a recurrent problem. Social democratic parties of the region need to cooperate and share experiences of how elections were organised, and how to effectively monitor and observe electoral processes. Another crucial challenge for social democrats would be to harness the opportunities presented by the

democratisation of information. Young people were more aware than ever of the world beyond national borders, they were being politicised, and would not settle for the rigid and authoritarian structures of the past. Social democratic parties should be the voice of this generation and the architects of democratic change in the CIS region, as they had done in other regions of the world over many decades.

The lack of democracy and accountability in the region was also identified as a factor which contributes to the lack of progress on resolution of conflicts. Historical context could also be a major obstacle to international cooperation, with negative attitudes to different nationalities and ethnic groups often based on past injustices and disputes. By going through a process of reconciliation and addressing historical grievances, it was possible to turn a page on past actions and work for a mutually beneficial and peaceful future relationship.

Meeting of the SI Africa Committee in Praia, Cabo Verde

15-16 November 2019



The SI Africa Committee met on 15-16 November 2019 in Praia, Cabo Verde, hosted by the SI member African Party of Cabo Verde's Independence (PAICV). The meeting opened at the National Assembly of Cabo Verde. SI Secretary General Luis Ayala began by paying tribute to Ousmane Tanor Dieng, the former leader of the Socialist Party of Senegal, SI vice-president and a former chair of the Africa Committee, who passed away on 15 July 2019. Tanor Dieng was a much respected and cherished figure within the global community of social democrats, deeply engaged in the work of the SI and the pursuit of a better future for his country. A minute of silence was held in his honour.

In her opening address, Janira Hopffer Almada, leader of PAICV and vice-president of the SI, welcomed all delegates to Cabo Verde and expressed her satisfaction and honour to hold the

event in her home country. She considered that democracy was going through a difficult moment and was in need of attention, with it being in particular a decisive moment for democracy in Africa. Though the process of decolonisation had seen the victory of the liberation movements, the end of this process needed to be the consolidation of democracy, with participation and cooperation on a political level. She also touched on the fundamental challenge of climate change. This threatens the future of all people, but is particularly pertinent for small island countries, for which it is a major priority.

In his opening remarks, Luis Ayala spoke of his pride at the presence of Pedro Pires and José Maria Neves, two towering figures in the political history of Cabo Verde, whose work was being carried on by Janira Hopffer Almada. He reflected on the history of the SI, which after its formation in 1951 as a predominantly European organisation, had later taken on a new energy and an expanded membership in the following decades at the time of the fight against colonialism in Africa, in support of the national liberation movements and the struggle against dictatorships and authoritarian regimes elsewhere, transforming itself into a truly global organisation. The major struggles now were against nationalism and populism, and neoliberalism under which the super-rich prospered while the conditions of the poorest got worse. The members of the SI were internationalists, who wanted to globalise democracy, equality and opportunity.

Among the delegates were every one of the elected vice-presidents of the SI from Africa, bringing a wealth of expertise and experience to the proceedings in the contributions they made. In addition to the leader of the host party, the meeting was attended by Julião Mateus Paulo (Angola, MPLA), Chantal Kambiwa (Cameroon, SDF), Johnson Asiedu Nketiah (Ghana, NDC), Bokary Treta (Mali, RPM), Ahmed Ould Daddah (Mauritania, RFD) and Pendukeni Iivula-Ithana (Namibia, SWAPO).

Many of the contributions made by delegates were of great pertinence to the main theme of strengthening democracy and democratic institutions in Africa. The reports received from the countries of the region gave a contrasting picture, with both successes and setbacks for democracy and its institutions in recent times. The host country, Cabo Verde, was put forward as an example of what could be achieved in terms of development in an African country where a multi-party system with the conditions for the stable transfer of power existed, and was a leading country in the region in terms of higher education and infrastructure. Senegal was another country with a strong democratic tradition, where peaceful transitions of power had taken place. Since the change of leadership in 2012, socialist priorities such as infrastructure development had started to take place.

Important changes had occurred in Angola in the last two years, where a new president had been elected with an overwhelming majority. There, the oil price had directly affected the country, and the new president was focused on searching for new investment, diversifying the economy and fighting corruption, nepotism and relationships which did not benefit Angola. In São Tomé and Príncipe, after a number of years in opposition, the MLSTP/PSD had returned to power in a coalition following the elections of 2018. One of the major challenges it faced was combating instability and consolidating democracy in order to be able to take steps for development, and the new government was taking important actions by beginning work on new transport infrastructure in 2020. The Committee also heard that after a long struggle, the Democratic Republic of Congo had succeeded in finding democracy, although the constitution needed re-writing to give the people their full rights. SI-member PALU wanted to learn from the experiences of other African parties in order to build its organisation and get its ideology across to the people.

In Namibia, the SI-member SWAPO was for the first time since liberation facing formidable opposition. Rapidly rising unemployment and apparent irregularities meant that an independent candidate for president had gained a lot of support, as the government was perceived not to have lived up to the promises it had made to its people. In a report on the situation in Ghana, where democratic achievements had been rolled back, the Committee was given a warning that democracy could not be taken for granted. There, the incumbent government, which had taken control of the electoral commission, was recruiting militias and incorporating them into state security in advance of elections in 2020. The Committee was further warned of a severe threat to democracy in Cameroon, where a crisis in the anglophone regions of the country had led to a risk of war. The integrity of the elections was undermined by the lack of administration in those regions, which would create problems for all those born there, potentially making the elections a source of further conflict for the country.

The façade of democracy was identified as a major problem in Chad, where the president has been in power for over 30 years, using the military to keep power and refusing dialogue, governing by decree even when the national assembly was in session. Under these challenging conditions the SI-member UNDR was preparing to contest legislative elections in 2020. A similar dynamic exists in Djibouti, where since independence the opposition has never been given the opportunity to come to power. The SI-member MRD reported that it remains one of the poorest countries in the world, but recent regional developments such as the peace agreement between Ethiopia and Eritrea and hopes for a democratic breakthrough there could have a positive influence on Djibouti. The FFS of Algeria described a struggle for a state of law, democracy and gender equality in face of restrictions, control of elections and corruption by the regime. The opposition lacked access to the media, but expressed its pride in the popular revolution taking place in Algeria, urging the SI to support popular movements across the world.

A number of participants underlined that it was necessary for members to be vigilant and to raise the alert when a party in power did not live up to the democratic values and expectations of the organisation, even in difficult situations where it involved sister parties and friends. In this context, the situation in Guinea was of great concern to the Committee, where the President was seeking to change the constitution to allow his re-election and in reaction the country has suffered violent street protests.

In Niger, the incumbent President Mahamadou Issoufou of the SI-member PNDS had committed to not seeking a third term, respecting the constitution and reinforcing African democracy in the process, and his tenure in office was widely perceived as an example of good governance.

A number of the countries in Africa in which the SI has member parties continue to be touched by conflict, and this was covered in depth under the theme of 'Resolving conflicts and securing peace to ensure progress and development for the benefit of the peoples of Africa'. As long as conflict persists, efforts are forced solely on winning peace, which jeopardises progress and development in other areas. One such country that has suffered greatly in this regard has been Sudan, represented for the first time at a meeting of the SI by the SLM. The Committee heard that the end of the military regime had not solved the problems of the country. Independent armed forces continued to operate and are destabilising the country, making peace still a priority in order to deal with the problems created by the former regime.

The Sahel region continues to face major threats to peace and security from terrorist forces, as outlined by delegates from Mali, Niger, Mauritania and Senegal, among others. The contributions on this grave threat to regional peace called for more solidarity from the international community to deal with the lack of development and opportunities that cause

and exacerbate insecurity in the region. The Sahel is a key to security in Africa and the entire world, and such a multidimensional crisis requires joint solutions. Parts of the territory have become a no man's land favourable to drug traffickers.

For a country such as Mauritania, the opposition RFD was struggling to bring about change through a process of evolution rather than revolution, and considered a spirit of cooperation between the countries of the Sahel would help to reinforce the strong human and cultural links in the region. This partnership could transform perspectives on the current security situation and set an important example for the continent. Representatives from Mali also stressed the importance of regional cooperation and the work done to stabilise the country, which was suffering from a complex crisis since the 2012 rebellion by a group that wanted to detach a part of the Malian territory. The only response was the full realisation of the democratic project, through which the multi-secular population of Mali could continue to live without exclusion or stigmatisation.

The lack of peace and security in many parts of the continent are a major driving force behind the migration flows through Africa and across the Mediterranean. This phenomenon had an impact on many countries including Morocco, which while facing internal problems such as youth unemployment and healthcare provision, could not also act as the gendarme of Europe, The USFP called for the question of Western Sahara to be treated under the auspices of the UN, with the participation of Morocco, Algeria, Mauritania and the Polisario Front.

The Committee received a report on the recent regional meeting of SI Women held in Niamey, with the participation of the SI secretary general. This meeting was an opportunity for SIW to analyse the question of parity in Africa, in connection with the African Union's Agenda 2063 "the Africa we want", particularly in regards to political participation, conflict management and peace and security processes as well as land management, and to underline that female autonomy was a prerequisite for sustainable development.

Those represented at the meeting faced both common challenges and unique national situations. Despite diverse circumstances, there was a shared sense of optimism for the future potential that could be unlocked in Africa through good governance with social democratic values. With the right leadership, solid democratic foundations, cooperation within and between nations, Africa will be well placed to take advantage of its natural resources in a sustainable way that ensures prosperity for many future generations. SI member parties had been fundamental to the liberation struggles and the establishment of democracy across Africa, and the SI will continue to have a crucial role by facilitating dialogue and ensuring that all of its member parties can draw benefit from the collective strength and experience of the organisation.

In addition to its working agenda and the exchanges on the state of social democracy in Africa, the Committee had the task of electing a new chair in accordance with the decisions of the last two SI Council meetings in Geneva and Santo Domingo. Following consultations involving all the SI vice-presidents from the region, a consensus was reached that Bokary Treta (Mali, RPM), SI vice-president, should take on the responsibility of chairing the Committee for the remainder of the inter-Congress period, in accordance with the statutes of the SI. His candidacy was accepted by the Committee by acclamation and he thanked those present for their faith in him, adding that the Committee could count on his commitment.

US Declaration on Israeli settlements an obstacle to peace

19 November 2019

The declaration by the US administration that Israeli settlements in occupied territory are “not, per se, inconsistent with international law” is a new obstacle to peace in the Middle East.

The formal recognition of Jerusalem, a historical holy site for Jews, Muslims and Christians, as the capital of Israel by the United States in December 2017, had already undermined the prospects of a durable solution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

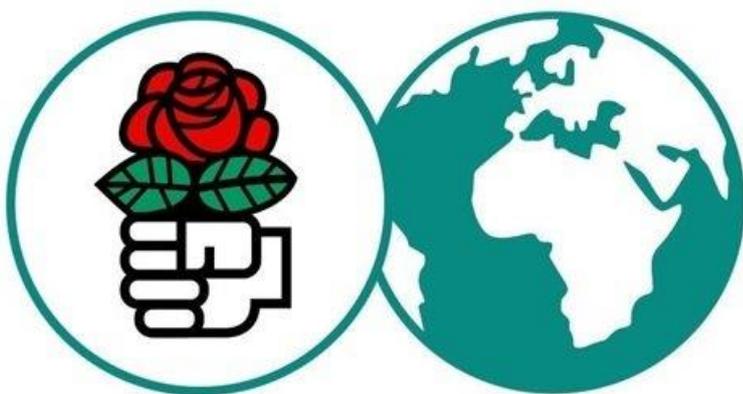
The US’ unilateral decisions, which ignore wider international consensus and international law, make the prospects for a peaceful solution to this longstanding conflict ever more distant.

This new declaration disregards the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, ratified by both the US and Israel, which stipulates that the Occupying Power shall not deport or transfer parts of its own civilian population into the territory it occupies, and runs contrary to UN Security Council Resolutions adopted since 1979 declaring that the Israeli occupation has no legal validity and constitutes a flagrant violation under international law and a major obstacle to the achievement of the two-State solution and a just, lasting and comprehensive peace.

Earlier this year, the Socialist International (SI) emphasised at a meeting in Ramallah on 30 July and in Tel Aviv on 31 July, including the participation of SI members from Palestine and Israel, its full support for the two-State solution for peace and a future of opportunities for the people of the Middle East. After more than 27 years of failing to achieve peace through the bilateral peace process since the Oslo Accords, the SI calls on the international community to collectively meet its responsibility under international law to bring an end to the occupation of Palestinian territory and to all impediments to the exercise by the Palestinian people of their right to self-determination.

COP25: SI calls for increased ambition and immediate action on the climate emergency

2 December 2019



The Socialist International and its member parties have for many years consistently advocated for concerted and coordinated international action to prevent catastrophic climate change and global warming. Recognising that climate change is an existential threat with far-reaching consequences upon all aspects of human life, including development, peace and prosperity, the SI’s Commission for a Sustainable World Society established in 2006, worked

intensively to develop a social democratic response to the challenge of climate change. The commission report, “From a High Carbon Economy to a Low Carbon Society”, was published in September 2009 and its conclusions remain pertinent to this day. In the decade since that report, climate change has remained at the heart of the agenda of the SI, as a major theme of Congress, Council and Presidium meetings. The SI has been present at major summits on climate change and sustainable development, including most recently the United Nations

Secretary General's Climate Action Summit in September 2019, and sought to coordinate a common approach to be undertaken by its member parties based on the fundamental principle of climate justice.

The Presidium of the SI, meeting shortly after the summit, underlined the extent to which socialist and social democratic parties continue to be at the forefront of global efforts to take all necessary steps to avert catastrophic climate change. In conjunction with COP25, the SI will, as on previous occasions, bring together environment ministers from the social democratic family for exchanges and discussions on their priorities and expectations.

Last year, on the eve of COP24 in Katowice, 94 leaders of the Socialist International signed an open letter with 'A global call for a sustainable world society – before it's too late', published on 30 November 2018. During the past year, it has become ever more clear that the current level of action is not sufficient. Despite the commitments made under the Paris Agreement, there has been no reduction in the concentration of greenhouse gases (GHG) in the atmosphere, or even a slowdown in the rate at which this is increasing. According to the most recent report of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the global concentration of CO₂ increased to yet another high 407.8 parts per million (ppm) in 2018, having first crossed the symbolic 400 ppm benchmark in 2015.

This trend is confirmed by the UN Emissions Gap Report 2019, which describes a rise in GHG emissions of 1.5% per year over the last decade, reaching a record high of 55.5 gigatonnes of equivalent carbon dioxide (GtCO₂e) in 2018. This collective failure to stop the growth in GHG emissions has severe consequences, as for each year of postponed peaking, deeper and faster actions are now required. At the time of publishing, the report calculated that 2030 emissions would need to be 55% lower than 2018 to put the world on the least-cost pathway to limiting global warming to below 1.5°C. However, global emissions are not estimated to peak before 2030 if current climate policies and ambition levels of the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) are maintained, by which time the narrowing window of opportunity to take the necessary action to prevent catastrophic global heating will have firmly closed.

The science has long been clear, and the evidence continues to mount that actions are not matching up to ambitions when it comes to reducing GHG emissions. Human activities are estimated to have already caused approximately 1.0°C of global warming above pre-industrial levels, and if it continues to increase at the current rate, warming is likely to reach 1.5°C between 2030 and 2052, according to the recent Special Report of the IPCC on the impacts of global warming of 1.5°C. The need to restrict global warming to an absolute maximum of 1.5°C is clear. Climate models project a significant difference as a result of limiting warming to 1.5°C as opposed to 2.0°C, when it comes to increases in mean temperature, hot extremes in most inhabited regions and risks from heavy precipitation events in several regions, and droughts and precipitation deficits in some regions. In short, with an increase of 2.0°C, extreme weather events become much more probable. Just this year, we have witnessed the devastating cost of storms, floods, droughts and extreme heat, which all too often bring destruction and loss of life to those least able to deal with the consequences, and who bear least responsibility for the climate emergency.

We know the challenge is immense. The IPCC outlines that pathways limiting global warming to 1.5°C require unprecedented systems transitions in terms of scale, in energy, land, urban, infrastructure and industrial systems. All sectors need to contribute with deep emissions reductions and a significant upscaling of investments. As outlined by the UN Secretary General at this year's Climate Action Summit, the climate emergency is a race we are currently losing. Although the summit was significant in gathering together government leaders, business and civil society actors to increase momentum and impetus in tackling the climate crisis and a

number of important pledges were made, more political will and deeper commitments are needed if the race is to be won.

Today, as the COP25 Summit begins in Madrid, the Socialist International calls on the international community to build on the Paris Agreement and the pledges made at the Climate Action Summit to raise the ambition of the NDC targets and long-term strategies for all countries, in particular the major carbon polluters, in order to reach carbon neutrality by 2050. More than this, a commitment is needed to immediate action to secure the urgent emissions cuts that need to occur in the next couple of years in order to have a chance to limit global warming to 1.5°C. To this end, the Socialist International strongly advocates action to tackle subsidies for fossil fuels, implement taxes on carbon, and end new coal power beyond 2020. We are living in a climate emergency, which can only be addressed through unprecedented multilateral cooperation by governments, business and civil society. For the future of our planet and the well-being of the generations to come, failure is not an option.

Challenges and priorities for Latin America and the Caribbean on the threshold of 2020 - Meeting of the SI Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean, Montego Bay, Jamaica

19-20 December 2019



At a time of deep social and political unrest throughout the continent, the Socialist International held a meeting of its Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean in Jamaica on 19-20 December hosted by the SI member party in that country, the People's National Party (PNP). The agenda included four key themes of great relevance and

importance for the whole of our political family: (i) The defence and strengthening of democracy in the countries of the region; (ii) Ensuring respect for the rights and freedoms of all; (iii) Today's priorities in our struggle for social justice, and (iv) Civic peace as the foundation and objective of good governance.

The meeting opened with contributions by the President of the Committee, Miguel Vargas, Leader of the Dominican Revolutionary Party, PRD, and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Dominican Republic; the President of the People's National Party, PNP, of Jamaica, Dr. Peter Phillips; and the Secretary General of the Socialist International, Luis Ayala.

The President of the Committee, along with thanking the hosts, underlined that the region today faces big challenges that must be addressed with boldness, creativity and common sense, among them, climate change, criminality and inequality which undermine democracy and political stability. According to a recent report by the Economic Commission for Latin America (CEPAL), during the past five years the downward trend of poverty and extreme poverty has

been halted and it is expected that the number of the poor will change from 185 million in 2018 to 191 million in 2019. The upheaval and social turbulence that affect many nations in this part of the world is rooted on the deep inequalities that afflict the whole of Latin America and the Caribbean, threatening the peace and political and social stability that the continent has known this century. Together with calling on the social democrats of the region to be the guarantors of peace and the promoters of democracy, he emphasised that dialogue and mutual respect must be the way forward to achieve the wellbeing of all. Referring to his own country, the Dominican Republic, he called to protect and preserve political stability, and to sustain the economic growth and social peace in the country.

The President of the People's National Party expressed his satisfaction at the holding of this meeting which, in line with the tradition of the democratic left was a family meeting, and he offered a warm welcome to all the participants. For the past three decades the party has been mainly in government, preoccupied with the challenges inherent to this responsibility and he seized this opportunity re-assert their identity as members of this global political family. He declared that the PNP is anti-colonial, supports the rule of international law, opposes hegemonic pretensions and influences, and is committed to the pursuit of a more equitable and socially just world. These are the principles on which are based the hopes for an improvement in the standards of living and quality of governance in developing countries, with policies of global development that today are being challenged by unilateral policies or major power politics, while it becomes ever more evident that thirty years of increased globalisation has resulted in a greater inequality among and within the nations, as is the case in countries of the Caribbean. The debt crisis and the spread of IMF programmes has created a fiscal environment that has severely limited the policy options of governments in the region and has contributed to undercutting popular confidence in the institutions of governance and in democracy.

The SI Secretary General expressed his appreciation to the host party, pleased that the Committee was meeting in Jamaica. He said the PNP was linked to the development of this International through the action of historical leaders like Michael Manley, who helped to deepen the global character of the SI, not only with his work in this part of the world but also by providing key definitions for the North-South dimension that contributed to giving a universal profile to social democracy. We are living in times when nationalistic, populist and conservative political forces in different parts of the world present a challenge to our values and ideals. This challenge is posed by those who undermine freedoms and rights and who put forward narrow and discriminatory policies that contrast with our vision of a common world with integrating ideas for the building of a State which is modern and democratic and ensures freedoms and rights for all. Likewise, our member parties are committed to advancing equality and social justice, as experience has shown us that these are essential and necessary to strengthen and preserve democracy.

Representatives of parties from the region, including Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Haiti, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela, contributed to the discussions sharing their experiences and perspectives on the realities that prevail today in their respective countries. The Committee registered in particular the following conclusions drawn from the exchanges:

With reference to the situation in **Bolivia**, the Bolivian representatives informed that after a wide-ranging citizen mobilisation in that country in protest over the electoral fraud which was reported and verified by an investigation carried out by the Organisation of American States (OAS) of the elections held on 20 October, the president Evo Morales did not suffer a coup d'état, highlighted by the fact that no one in the Armed Forces nor any the commandants who took military decisions during the crisis, ended up occupying positions of power in the State.

The new situation in the country after the resignation of the president presents today for democrats enormous possibilities for the full recovery of democracy and the implementation of the values of pluralism, alternation and accountability by the authorities. Aware that Bolivia faces the risk of a conservative restoration that, ignoring the lessons of the country's past history, could try to govern favouring only one sector of the society and in a technocratic and repressive way, those who are today at the head of the provisional government were called on to ensure a transition that, in line with the will of the people and the expectations of the international community, would lead that nation towards a pluralist democracy with presidential alternation and respectful of the rights of the minorities. The Committee also urged the Bolivian people to express in the next presidential elections all their will to give themselves a democratic and progressive direction that will ensure a stable and sustainable government, overcoming the threats that extremism poses to their wellbeing and security.

The events of the last two months in **Chile** are evidence of a serious level of political unrest, rooted in the inequality resulting from an unjust wealth distribution. The massive social mobilisations demanding fundamental change to the model of development, have been damaged by minority sectors which promote looting, vandalism and violence. Together with rejecting and condemning these kinds of actions, we make a call to protect human rights and to investigate the outrages perpetrated, and to recognise the veracity of the reports issued by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and other specialised bodies. The crisis in Chile is political and therefore the agreement reached by the great majority of the political parties to engage in a constituent process is a significant step forward. The Committee called for the promotion of a social pact accompanied by greater tax justice. We declare our solidarity with the people of Chile and our sister parties, the Party for Democracy, the Radical Social Democratic Party and the Socialist Party.

The Committee expressed its concern over the deterioration that has characterised the general situation in the sister **Republic of Haiti** for more than a year, a situation that endangers the hard won democratic gains by the Haitian people since the fall of the dictatorship. It strongly condemned the multiple human rights abuses, the excessive use of force to suppress demonstrators, as well as the killings and other crimes committed by government agents and their militias. Those responsible for the massacres in Lasaline, in Cite Soleil and Bel-Air must be brought to justice and held accountable for their actions.

The Committee extended its firm support to the Haitian people in the responsibilities which they must assume with lucidity to advance the process of democratisation, as well as its solidarity with their struggle to change the way in which the State affairs are carried out, to put an end to corruption in the government administration and improve the living conditions of the people. The Committee also invites its member parties and supporters in the country to meet with other democratic and credible political forces in favour of a new governance for the country and to put an end the economic crisis in the interest of the Haitian people.

In view of the general elections that are expected in **Jamaica** during 2020, the Committee expressed its solidarity with the PNP that was facing a party in government that has failed its citizens and the international community in not maintaining the required standards of good governance and transparency. In particular, the Committee noted with concern the rise in criminality, as well as the increasing level of inequality whereby a fifth part of the population is today living under extreme poverty. In the face of general elections, the PNP remains committed to continue its fight for equal opportunities and social justice and to maintain the highest standards of integrity and transparency, objectives in which it has the full support of the Socialist International.

In relation to **Panama**, together with reiterating the satisfaction shared by all the members of the International at the electoral victory of President Laurentino Nito Cortizo, the Committee expressed its solidarity and support for the government, which under the leadership of the new president, has assumed a social agenda that includes the objective of freeing themselves of the “sixth frontier” that is inequality and the social debt, while maintaining a commitment to strengthen multilateralism in opposition to the unilateralism of the current US administration, as informed by the Panamanian representative. The date of this meeting, 20 December, coincided with the 30th anniversary of the invasion of Panama, a date that President Nito Cortizo had declared as a Day of National Mourning, rendering justice to the victims and their families.

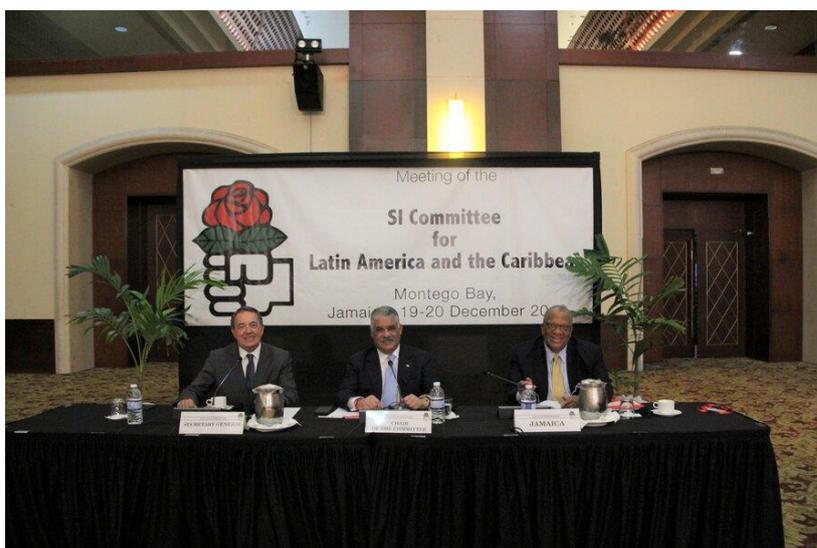
Referring to **Peru**, the Committee considered that the dissolution of the Congress on 30 September signified a step backwards in the deepening and consolidation of the democratic system in that country, sharing the OAS criteria that the application of the Constitution in this case by the president of the Republic of Peru, Mr. Martín Vizcarra Cornejo, must be addressed by the highest Constitutional Court of Peru, a matter that has still not been resolved by that Court responding to a demand for their jurisdiction in this case to establish if the procedures were duly observed. Otherwise, the corresponding legal measures should be taken. Regarding the next legislative elections called for 26 January 2020, the rules of the Special Electoral Constituents must be clearly established, in particular in regard to the restrictions on the representatives of the parties of the democratic opposition.

In relation to **Venezuela**, the Committee firmly rejected all types of political violence and called for respect for the Constitution, the laws, the National Assembly and its President Juan Guaidó and its other authorities, for human rights and for all the political rights of all Venezuelans. It also called on the parties in conflict to seek a political solution to the crisis in order to achieve a process of re-institutionalisation that will allow, as soon as possible, the holding of free and fair presidential elections with guarantees for all parties, as well as the rest of the elections that are part of the constitutional timetable.

The Committee will continue to permanently follow the Venezuelan conflict, demanding the freedom of all the political prisoners, among whom are members of parties from this International in that country, as well as an end to the lifting of the parliamentary immunity of members of the National Assembly and the freedom of the Member of Parliament Juan Requesens and other political prisoners recognised in the report presented by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Michelle Bachelet.

The international community must continue to work together with the UN bodies overseeing the huge migration crisis, which up to now, according to the IOM, reveals that more than 4.8 million Venezuelans are in a situation of diaspora, fleeing the political conflict and the economic crisis.

At the close of the meeting, the Committee agreed to hold its next meeting in April 2020 in the Dominican Republic.



For the restoration of democratic order in Venezuela

6 January 2020

The Socialist International congratulates the members of the National Assembly of Venezuela for their firm and resolute decision to proceed with the renewal of the mandate of their authorities in accordance with the Constitution and the laws of the country, as well as with the rules of the Assembly, in spite of all the attempts by the Nicolas Maduro regime to obstruct it and prevent this action by the legislators, including through the use of force and of military and police personnel.

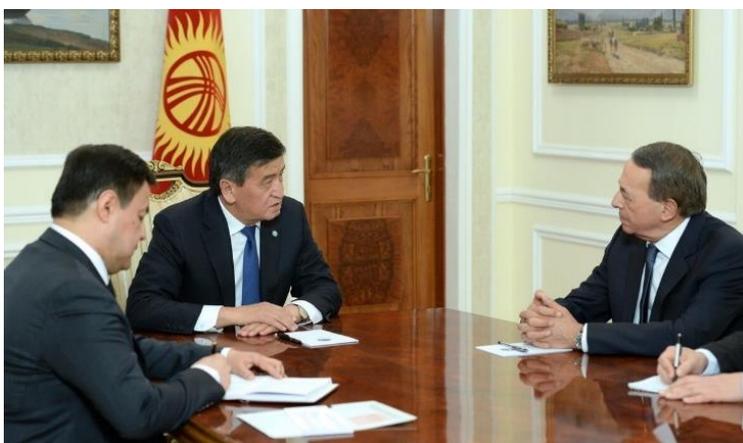
The SI also congratulates Juan Guaidó on his re-election as president of the National Assembly, and the other members of the executive board elected by that institution in a process that was carried out with due respect for the relevant rules, involving the participation of one hundred deputies that formed the necessary quorum for the functioning of the National Assembly.

We reiterate the urgency and the need to restore democratic order in Venezuela, as well as the full respect for the Constitution and the laws, the human rights and the full political rights of the Venezuelan people. We once again raise our voices for the release of all political prisoners.

The holding of free and fair presidential elections, with guarantees for all parties, as demanded by the vast majority of Venezuelans and hoped for by the international community, is a necessity that cannot be postponed any longer.

Secretary General of the SI in Kyrgyzstan

14-18 January 2020



Meeting of HE Sooronbay Jeenbekov, President of Kyrgyzstan, and SI Secretary General Luis Ayala

In accordance with the decision adopted by the SI Committee for the CIS, the Caucasus and the Black Sea at its meeting in Minsk, Belarus, on 8-9 November 2019, to carry out a visit to Kyrgyzstan in view of the critical developments affecting the SI-member Social Democratic Party of Kyrgyzstan, the SI Secretary General, Luis Ayala, travelled to the Kyrgyz capital Bishkek in January 2020.

At that meeting in Minsk, representatives of the SDP of Kyrgyzstan had presented a report on

the deteriorating political situation in the country following the detention of the former president of the Republic and former SDPK leader Almazbek Atambayev, and the arrest of other members of the party leadership. Taking on the task to visit the country and hold talks with representatives of the government of Kyrgyzstan as well as the SDPK, the first party

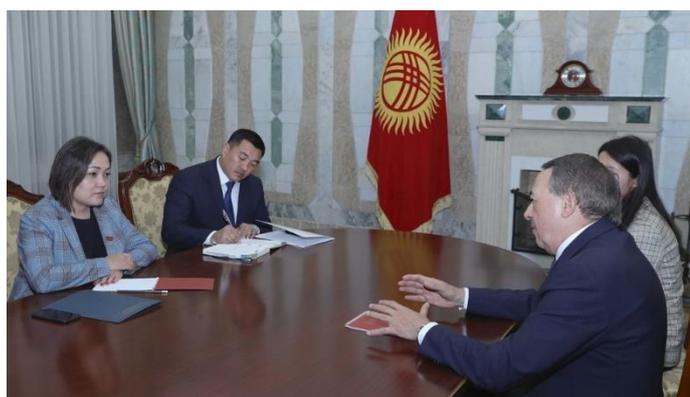


Members of the SDPK parliamentary group with the SI Secretary General

in the post-Soviet region to come to power from opposition, the SI Secretary General undertook a wide range of meetings, including with His Excellency Sooronbay Jeenbekov, President of Kyrgyzstan. He held meetings with Isa Omurkulov who was elected as head of the SDPK faction in 2016; with Aida Kasymalieva, Deputy Speaker of parliament; members of the SDPK parliamentary group; with families of SPDK members who are in prison; and with members of the media. Luis Ayala also visited Almazbek Atambayev's residence, from where he was apprehended in August 2019. Atambayev, who is currently under arrest charged with several criminal offences, denies all the charges against him and is now reported to be suffering from health problems. A number of other members of the SDPK also remain in custody.



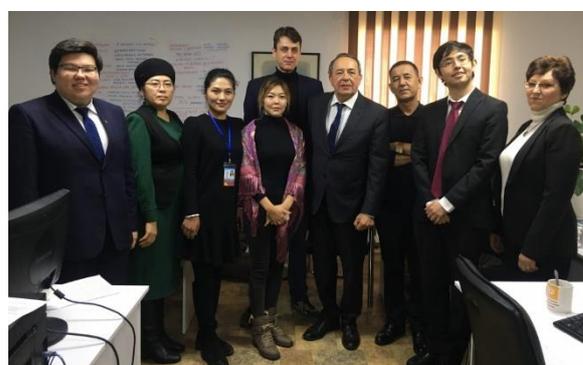
The Socialist International has been deeply concerned with these serious developments affecting its member party, the SDPK. After the extensive discussions held in Bishkek, the Socialist International has continued to closely monitor the situation in the country with a view to contribute to a positive resolution.



*Meeting with the families
Aida Kasymalieva, Deputy Speaker of parliament*



*Meeting with members of the media in
Kyrgyzstan*



*SI Secretary General with Khadyrbek
Atambayev at Koy-Tash, the residence of
former president Almazbek Atambayev who
is currently under arrest*

Socialist International commemorates International Holocaust Remembrance Day

27 January 2020



Today the Socialist International solemnly observes the International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust. Today, we think of the six million Jews and countless members of other minorities who were killed during the Holocaust, a horrific stain on the history of humanity that must never be forgotten or diminished. The social democratic family attaches the utmost importance to remembering and learning the lessons of this tragedy, to ensure it can never be repeated.

The recent rise in anti-Semitic acts in different regions of the world, including violence perpetrated against members of the Jewish community, is a grave concern. The Holocaust was not an isolated moment in history, but deeply rooted in many centuries of anti-Semitism and discrimination against Jews. Governments, political parties and leaders in all countries have a responsibility to take action to recognise, confront and tackle anti-semitism, wherever it occurs.

As stated in the declaration adopted by the Socialist International Council held in Santo Domingo in January 2019 on Holocaust Remembrance, the SI rejects any denial of the Holocaust and calls upon governments and political parties across the world to fight against this and all forms of racism and discrimination. The SI reiterates once more its condemnation of all manifestations of religious intolerance, incitement, harassment or violence against persons or communities based on ethnic origin or religious belief, everywhere.

Trump and Netanyahu have not proposed peace

29 January 2020

The Socialist International has learned with grave concern the plan presented yesterday by US President Trump and interim Israeli PM Netanyahu on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which does not consider one of the two parties, the Palestinians. This proposal ignores the reality on the ground in which the Palestinian people live and exacerbates the situation as it offers no resolution to the conflict.

The SI has long been committed to support and work for peace in the Middle East, a region in which the organisation counts with member parties in both Israel and Palestine. In the efforts of the organisation to contribute to peace in the region, the SI remains convinced that there will be no solution to the conflict and no lasting peace if it is not agreed and established by both sides of the conflict.

Therefore both parties need to negotiate and agree a solution for it to be permanent and recognised by the entire international community, who support peace through the many decisions and resolutions of the United Nations and its Security Council, and in line with international law.

The Socialist International has for many years supported the two-state solution, working with Israelis and Palestinians who, without their consent and agreement, peace will never be possible.

Colloque: Pierre Mauroy ou la passion de l'Internationale

31 January 2020



Maurice Braud @BraudMaurice · Jan 31

Luis Ayala, Secrétaire général de l'Internationale socialiste, rappelle le rôle de Pierre Mauroy au Chili en 1988 pour manifester contre la dictature de Pinochet



On Friday, January 31, 2020, the Pierre Mauroy Institute organized a symposium in the Senate in France, under the title: "Pierre Mauroy ou la passion de l'Internationale" in honor of Mauroy's commitment to international affairs. The Secretary General of the Socialist International Luis Ayala, who was one of the keynote speakers invited to the event, highlighted the important contribution that Pierre Mauroy made in international politics and in particular his role in the Socialist International, first as one of its Vice-Presidents and then as its President.

He recalled that one of his first meetings with Mauroy took place in his home country, Chile, at a time when it was still under military dictatorship, and commented on Mauroy's lifelong active commitment to the principles and values of the global social-democratic political family.

The event, which was chaired by Michel Thauvin, co-president of the Institute, also received a message from the UN Secretary General António Guterres, a former president of the Socialist International.

SI Secretary General in Cabo Verde for the XVI Congress of the PAICV

1-2 February 2020



Leader of the PAICV, Janira Hopffer Almada



SI Secretary General addressing the PAICV Congress, 2 February 2020

Pedro Pires, former President of Cabo Verde (left), José Maria Neves, former Prime Minister of Cabo Verde and former leader of the PAICV (second from right)



SI Secretary General, Luis Ayala, with PAICV leader Janira Hopffer Almada

The SI in the Dominican Republic for elections

February 2020



SI Secretary General, Luis Ayala, with Miguel Vargas, Leader of the PRD, and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Dominican Republic, SI Vice-President



SI Secretary General in Senegal for Hommage to Ousmane Tanor Dieng

23 February 2020



On Sunday 23 February the Socialist Party of Senegal organised a special homage at the party headquarters to honour the memory of Ousmane Tanor Dieng, their former party leader who passed away on 15 July 2019. The SI Secretary General was specially invited to attend and to address the gathering on behalf of the Socialist International of which Tanor Dieng served as a vice-president and a former chair of the SI Africa Committee.

The event, which attracted a large number of attendees, was addressed by the President of the Republic of Senegal, HE Macky Sall and the Secretary General of the PS, Aminata Mbengue Ndiaye, among other distinguished leaders and members of his family.



SI Secretary General, Luis Ayala, with Aminata Mbengue Ndiaye, Secretary General of the Socialist Party, Senegal

Colosio Foundation Forum in Mexico: Strengthening of political parties, facing new global challenges

3 March 2020



The SI Secretary General, Luis Ayala, was invited to be a keynote speaker at a forum organised by the Colosio Foundation in Mexico on the subject of strengthening political parties facing new global challenges. The meeting was also addressed by Alejandro Moreno, president of the SI member party, the PRI of Mexico, and Rafael Michelini, leader of Nuevo Espacio, Uruguay, a Vice-President of the SI. The forum was chaired by José Murat, president of the Colosio Foundation.

SI celebrates International Women's Day

8 March 2020



SI returns to the Dominican Republic for elections

14 March 2020



The Socialist International Secretary General and international election observers in Dominican Republic



A time for true solidarity - Socialist International statement on the COVID-19 pandemic

2 April 2020



The unprecedented widespread transmission of the coronavirus throughout the world is threatening the lives and livelihoods of people in every country and from all walks of life. This underscores just how inter-connected and inter-dependent the world is and in the fight to overcome this global pandemic, international cooperation is crucial. Multilateralism and solidarity are the cornerstone of our social democratic beliefs, and the values and principles that unite us in our International call on us all to stand together at this crucial moment to overcome this global threat.

This is a time for true solidarity. As we face this worldwide emergency, the immediate priority is to save lives, by ensuring that those who are most vulnerable to the illness are protected. We know that all our member parties in their respective countries are doing all they can to prevent and halt the spread of the virus, and to support the tireless efforts of health workers and all those in the medical profession who are in the front line of this battle.

The harsh economic consequences of the epidemic are causing a great deal of uncertainty and suffering. The full extent of the damage to the world economy caused by the spread of COVID-19 will not be known for some time, but governments need to act decisively to mitigate the economic hardship caused to many of the poorest in our societies, as well as migrants, refugees, and marginalised populations. The international community must also assist those in different parts of the world who lack the infrastructure and resources to combat the virus and treat those who become infected.

The coronavirus pandemic has, in a dramatic way, highlighted our position on the basic need for strong and efficient public health services as well as the right of all citizens to unhindered access to healthcare. It has equally underlined the fundamental role played by governments in providing for their citizens during a time of national emergency, and the value of robust and functioning public services at all times.

We have witnessed limitations on individual liberties in order to save lives, in the form of restrictive measures taken to limit the spread of the epidemic as well as the use of digital surveillance. While we recognise that such unprecedented measures are a tool to combat the pandemic, they need to be transparent, time-limited and accountable to democratic oversight, and must not be used as a pretext to undermine democratic institutions, freedom of information and the right to privacy.

These are challenging times for all, and ones that should give us a new perspective, knowledge and wisdom concerning our lives and societies. At a time when we are more than ever conscious of our common humanity we need to overcome conflict and work as one in solidarity with each other. As the UN Secretary General António Guterres stated only days ago, it is imperative that combatants in conflict put down their arms and join the fight against the common enemy - the coronavirus.

As social democrats, as an international movement, as parties and as individuals, we are all part of the efforts to overcome the COVID-19 pandemic. At this time our political family stands

firmly in solidarity with all its members, with those in government and those in opposition as they strive to ensure a swift, just and humane outcome to this crisis.

COVID-19: Views and updates



COVID-19: Make it the Last Pandemic, 12 May 2021

Report from the Independent Panel, Co-Chaired by Helen Clark, former prime minister of New Zealand, and Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, former President of Liberia and Nobel Laureate

La trampa de la falsa antinomia, 11 May 2021

Jesús Rodríguez, Radical Civic Union, UCR, Argentina, Vice-President of the Socialist International

Spanish non paper: "Vaccines for all" initiative, 7 May 2021

Pedro Sánchez, Prime Minister of Spain, Secretary General of the PSOE, and Vice-President of the Socialist International

Address to the Council of the Socialist International Women - Reinventing our future after Covid-19, 30 April 2021

SI Secretary General Luis Ayala

Open Letter for Breaking Patents to Combat Covid-19, 29 March 2021

Carlos Lupi, President of the Democratic Labor Party, PDT, and Vice-President of the Socialist International

The world needs a 'people's vaccine' for coronavirus, not a big-pharma monopoly, 23 July 2020

Helen Clark, former prime minister of New Zealand and member of the Global Commission on Drug Policy; and Winnie Byanyima, executive director of UNAids and UN undersecretary general

La resilience face a la pandémie de la Covid-19 & les perspectives de sortie de crise, 6 July 2020

Contribution du Parti Socialiste du Senegal a la reflexion prospective

Developing a political strategy in the post pandemic world, 4 June 2020

Norberto B. Gonzales, Chair of the PDSP, Philippines, and former National Security Adviser and Defense Secretary

Letter of President Milo Djukanović on the current pandemic crisis, 3 June 2020

Democratic Party of Socialists of Montenegro, DPS

La pandémie de Corona, une opportunité pour le lancement d'un modèle de développement sur des bases saines, 26 May 2020

Driss Lachguar, First Secretary of the USFP, Morocco

La lucha contra la pandemia se está haciendo a partir de las convicciones socialdemócratas, 26 May 2020

Samuel Doria Medina, President of Unidad Nacional, Bolivia

La pandémie du COVID-19 au Mali, 20 May 2020

Dr Bokary TRETÀ, Chair of the SI Africa Committee; Mr. Ousmane KONE, former Minister of Health; Mr. Lamine DIARRA, former Technical Advisor at MSAS

In Iran the corona virus a new challenge for the Kurdish people, 20 May 2020

Khalid Azizi, Secretary General of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP-IRAN)

Coronavirus is threatening Slovakia and the social state, 20 May 2020

Robert Fico, Chairman of SMER-SD

Ganar la guerra a la pandemia, también a la desigualdad y al estancamiento, 18 May 2020

Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas, Mexico, Honorary President of the SI

COVID-19 in Iraqi Kurdistan, 16 May 2020

Soran Jamal Taher, Head of PUK Relations Bureau

Letter regarding the COVID-19 situation in Bulgaria, 15 May 2020

Kornelia Ninova, Chairwoman of the Bulgarian Socialist Party, Vice-President of the SI

De la cuarentena a la sesentena, 14 May 2020

Mauricio Mulder, President of the Political Commission of the Peruvian Aprista Party

COVID-19 em Angola, 12 May 2020

Multi-sectoral Commission for Preventing and Combating COVID-19, Republic of Angola

Democracy and pandemic in Argentina, 11 May 2020

Lilia Puig, President of the Alem Foundation, official foundation of the UCR, and Parliamentarian of Mercosur

Corona Pandemic and Indian Response, 10 May 2020

Anand Sharma, Indian National Congress MP, Deputy Leader of the Congress Parliamentary Party, Former Union Cabinet Minister

The Anatomy of the Human, Political and Social Dimensions of the Covid-19 Pandemic in South Africa, 8 May 2020

Seiso Mohai, ANC MP, Chief Whip of the National Council of Provinces in the Parliament of the Republic of South Africa

Le temps du changement ! 7 May 2020

Mustapha Ben Jaafar, ETTAKATOL, Honorary President of the SI, President of the National Constitutional Assembly (ANC) of Tunisia 2011-2014

Letter from the Lithuanian Social Democratic Party, 6 May 2020

Gintautas Paluckas, LSDP Chairman

Armenia and COVID-19 In the international context: Solidarity and commitment, 5 May 2020

Mario Nalpatian, ARF Armenian Socialist Party, Vice-President of the SI

Working to hold back the coronavirus in Pakistan, 3 May 2020

Shazia Marri, Pakistan Peoples' Party, Vice-President of the SI

L'Algérie, à l'heure de la pandémie, 1 May 2020

Dr. Hakim Belahcel, First National Secretary of the FFS, Algeria

Coronavirus/COVID-19 in Haiti, 30 April 2020

Victor Benoit, RSD Haiti, Vice-President of the SI

Globalisation, solidarity and cooperation, 28 April 2020

Eero Heinäluoma, Vice-President of the SI, Member of the European Parliament
Tero Shemeikka, International Secretary, Finnish Social Democratic Party

Message from Carlos Lupi, 28 April 2020

Leader of the PDT Brazil, Vice-President of the SI

Italy and the pandemic, 27 April 2020

Pia Locatelli, PSI Italy, Vice-President of the SI

COVID-19 update from San Marino, 25 April 2020

Gerardo Giovagnoli, Secretary General, PSD

In Israel: Of Corona and Politics, 25 April 2020

Colette Avital, Meretz Party Israel, SI Vice-President

The world, Russia and the COVID-19 pandemic, 23 April 2020

Alexander Romanovich, A Just Russia Party, SI Vice-President

Statement on COVID-19, 21 April 2020

Socialist International Women

Una solución global para una pandemia global, 20 April 2020

Ricardo Lagos, former president of Chile

A letter of solidarity , 10 April 2020

Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu, leader of the CHP, Turkey

Déclaration du Parti Socialiste sur la lutte contre la pandémie COVID-19, 5 April 2020

PS, Senegal

COVID-19 situation in Spain, 3 April 2020

PSOE

Chile: Joint Declaration of the three SI member parties, 3 April 2020

PPD, PR, PS

SI observes 50th anniversary of Earth Day

22 April 2020



SI on the new coalition government in Israel

15 May 2020

The Socialist International (SI) has been at the forefront of many efforts to resolve conflicts across the world, with an underlying commitment to open and honest exchanges and the pursuit of peace under a shared ideology and as a political family. Nowhere is this more evident than in the Middle East, where with its member parties around the world, the SI continuously advocates for a two-state solution to achieve peace.

The SI has brought together representatives of both sides with a shared commitment to a just and durable resolution to the conflict to achieve peace, security, stability and prosperity for Israel and Palestine as independent sovereign states. Among them were statesmen such as Yitzhak Rabin and Shimon Peres, who as leaders of the Israeli Labour Party were committed to dialogue and engagement with their Palestinian counterparts within the common political family of the SI, and pursued peace with the Palestinians while serving as prime minister of Israel.

The commitment of its member parties in both Israel and Palestine to the peace process and the two state solution, to dialogue and consensus-building have made a significant impact on the cause of Middle East peace. The position of the SI on the Palestinian question is the result of serious, substantial and challenging discussions, undertaken in good faith by representatives of all SI member parties that have taken place at and during meetings of the SI, and cannot be unilaterally overruled by any single member party.

On multiple occasions, the SI expressed its firm rejection of the expansion of illegal Israeli settlements and called on the international community to collectively meet its responsibility under international law to bring an end to the occupation of Palestinian territory and to all impediments to the exercise by the Palestinian people of their right to self-determination. Prime Minister Netanyahu plans to expand settlements and annex large tracts of the occupied Palestinian territories and Jordan Valley in an attempt to permanently end the prospect of an independent Palestinian state based on the 1967 borders. This policy at the same time undermines the standing of the State of Israel and the outlook for a future of peace and stability for its citizens.

The decision of the Israeli Labour Party to join a government that intends to act in such a way runs counter to the principles of the SI, which require its members to support international action in favour of peace, tolerance, dialogue, understanding and cooperation among peoples. The SI deeply regrets that a party with a long and rich history in the global family of socialist, social democratic and labour parties has chosen to take a path that contradicts its fundamental values and positions, damaging the prospects of peace in the Middle East.

Venezuela, a concern for all democrats

28 May 2020

Once again, Nicolás Maduro's regime in Venezuela strikes the conscience of the international community and of democrats worldwide.

The illegitimate Supreme Court of Justice, subservient to the regime and established irregularly, without consideration for the Venezuelan Constitution, has resolved to disregard the legitimacy of the election of the leadership of the National Assembly by the 2020-2021 legislature that Juan Guaidó presides over today, elected by a large majority of its members last January. It has, simultaneously, declared as legitimate a leadership body headed by Luis Parra, which had received the support of a minority of Assembly members, and has attributed to it the constitutional and legal competences.

As can be seen, the National Assembly, the only space and legitimate institution in the context of an absence of rights, freedoms and guarantees in Venezuela today, has been subjected to a new assault by the authoritarian regime of Nicolás Maduro.

Our International, which groups socialist, social democratic and labour parties from different regions of the world, vigorously protests this new aggression against the only democratic and legitimate State institution in Venezuela, where today men and women, children, adults and the elderly suffer the consequences of misgovernment, repression, food shortages, and the absence of health services, which have led to millions of its citizens being forced to emigrate in inhumane conditions.

Our organisation equally raises its voice against the request of another obsequious institutional authority of the Venezuelan State, the attorney general, seeking to declare Voluntad Popular, one of our member parties in Venezuela, as a terrorist organisation. This party has participated in our activities for several years and we know well its founder

Leopoldo López, Juan Guaidó, Freddy Guevara, as well as other leaders and members, with whom we have worked since the party's creation, sharing with them our commitment and efforts to advance the freedoms and rights of our citizens, the strengthening of our democracies, opportunities for all and the practice of good government. We have no doubt that international public opinion will react decisively to any attempt to demonise or to destroy the voice of this political party, and in this we count with the concourse of all democrats in different countries of the world.

SI denounces arrest of Mikalai Statkevich in Belarus

1 June 2020

Mikalai Statkevich, leader of Narodnaya Gramada, our member party in Belarus, was sentenced this morning to 15 days in prison, following his arrest yesterday by the regime of Alexander Lukashenko.

Presidential elections in Belarus are due to be held on 9 August 2020 and Statkevich's imprisonment follows the rejection of his registration days ago as a candidate to the presidency on the regime's allegation that he has a criminal record due to his incarceration on the occasion of the 2010 elections.

Mikalai Statkevich was jailed in 2010 for taking part in peaceful pro-democracy protests regarding the conduct of the elections, in which he was a presidential candidate, and imprisoned for five years in very harsh conditions. Following his release, Statkevich continued actively engaged in his efforts for democracy in his country and has regularly taken part in meetings of the Socialist International, where he is Co-Chair of the SI Committee for the CIS, Caucasus and Black Sea, the last meeting of which was held in Belarus last November hosted by his party.

In the last days, the crackdown by the regime has intensified while peaceful rallies of the opposition have been held and a number of other pro-democracy activists have also been arrested.

The Socialist International calls on its members around the world to demand the immediate release of Mikalai Statkevich and others jailed these past days. Nothing but the holding of free and fair elections in Belarus is acceptable.



No! to all forms of racism and discrimination

The Black Lives Matter and anti-racist protests that have erupted in cities around the world in the wake of the killing of George Floyd by a policeman in Minneapolis on 26 May is a long overdue call for action everywhere in order to once and for all bring an end to the systemic racism that prevails in so many countries across the globe.

The principle that "All human beings are born free and equal, in dignity and rights" is a fundamental pillar of the identity of our

International since its origins and has always been at the forefront of the battle against all forms of discrimination, be it race, colour, ethnicity, culture, gender, class or religion. We are committed to continue our action at every level, nationally and internationally, to eliminate the scourge of racism and to remain vigilant so that all rights for all people everywhere are fully respected.

Democracy and its actors - enemies of Maduro

16 June 2020

Original: Spanish

Yesterday in Venezuela, following a decision adopted by the illegitimate Supreme Court of Justice obedient to the authoritarian regime of Nicolás Maduro, was announced the suspension of the national leadership of Acción Democrática, a member party of the Socialist International headed by Henry Ramos, leader of that political formation and a vice-president of this global organisation of social democratic, socialist and labour parties.

This new escalation against the country's democratic actors - and in this case of Acción Democrática, a party that has a proud 78-year history in which from both in government and opposition it has guaranteed freedoms and rights for all Venezuelans - takes place in the framework of a constant persecution of the opposition and of imprisonment for many, including parliamentarians, political leaders and other citizens who are victims of repression by the authoritarian system built by the Nicolás Maduro regime which aims at silencing and eliminating any opinion that is critical of or contrary to his government. In line with this, the regime itself, through the Supreme Court of Justice, has also appointed a new leadership of Acción Democrática composed of new members, who respond to the designs of the Maduro regime.

Along with this, we want to denounce a double strategy by the regime, that of first eliminating one by one each democratic political party today in the opposition, which also includes other members of the Socialist International, such as the Un Nuevo Tiempo and Voluntad Popular parties, and then to carry out a farce of elections for a new National Assembly with the concurrence of only those who Nicolás Maduro approves.

As is evident day by day, the people of Venezuela, subjected to repression, facing hunger, with a health system in crisis in the midst of a pandemic, and subject to the designs of increasing authoritarianism, require urgent attention from the international community. For our part, we will continue actively on the side of our comrades, of our member parties, and of all those suffering injustices and the lack of freedoms and rights, until the Venezuelan people recover their democracy.

SI renews its call for international rejection of Israeli annexation and to support the two-state solution

24 June 2020

The Socialist International reiterates that the planned unilateral annexation by Israel of large areas of the occupied West Bank in Palestine would be a clear violation of international law and a devastating blow to any future prospect of peace and statehood for the Palestinian people. In the face of this grave threat to future peace, the SI once more calls on its member

parties, governments and the wider international community to reiterate their support for Palestinian statehood and the two-state solution.

As the SI outlined when the annexation plan was first presented by US President Trump and Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu, this is a proposal that ignores the reality on the ground and gives no consideration to the Palestinians. It offers no resolution to the conflict and would exacerbate the situation, in an attempt to permanently end the prospect of an independent Palestinian state based on the 1967 borders. In a statement last month, the SI underlined that this policy simultaneously undermines the standing of the State of Israel and the outlook for a future of peace and stability for its citizens, a fact that has been raised with concern by many true friends of Israel both domestically and internationally.

For an end to conflict and lasting peace, it is fundamental that any solution is agreed upon by both sides. This means that for any resolution to be permanent it must be negotiated and approved by both parties, and recognised by the international community, which supports peace in line with international law and the many decisions and resolutions of the United Nations and its Security Council. Regrettably, the current Israeli government has shown no willingness to negotiate peace, and is instead relying on unilateral actions backed by a US administration that seems determined to sabotage future prospects for peace and undermine adherence to international law.

The SI is fortunate to count among its member parties some of the most prominent voices for peace and a two-state solution in Israel and Palestine, and as long as these forces continue their struggle and make their voices heard, there remains hope for a peaceful resolution. But the realisation of the annexation plan would bring a grave risk that those in favour of peace will become more and more marginalised as the hope of statehood for Palestinians through negotiations is extinguished. For this reason it is a crucial time for those who oppose this illegal annexation plan to unite and take action.

The moment has come for the international community as a whole to make their voices heard in favour of the rights of the Palestinian people, rights which have been denied for far too long. The SI has for a number of years called for the immediate unconditional recognition of the State of Palestine on the borders of June 1967 with East Jerusalem as its capital, in response to decades of failing to achieve peace through the bilateral peace process. Many governments, including a significant number led by SI member parties, have already given official recognition to the State of Palestine, but this latest threat to Palestinian statehood demands renewed efforts to ensure legal recognition. To this end, the SI now reasserts its call for all governments that have not yet done so to immediately recognise Palestine, and urges its member parties to intensify their efforts to ensure this happens in their respective countries.

The demands of the Palestinian people for an end to occupation and the system of segregation, an end to discrimination and the right to full equality, and the exercising of self-determination through the establishment of a Palestinian state on the 1967 borders remain unchanged. These legitimate demands will not be diminished by unilateral moves taken by Israel in violation of international law, and the SI reiterates its solidarity with the Palestinian non-violent opposition and all those struggling for the rights and freedoms of the Palestinian people.

SI protests against increased persecution of SI members and opposition in Belarus

26 June 2020

Ahead of the forthcoming elections on 9 August in Belarus, the persecution of political opponents by Alexander Lukashenko's regime has not only continued, it has intensified with violent repression.

In a public statement on 1 June the Socialist International denounced the sentencing of Mikalai Statkevich, the leader of our member party in Belarus, Narodnaya Gramada, and co-chair of the SI Committee for the CIS, Caucasus and Black Sea who was barred from registering as a presidential candidate, to fifteen days in prison for taking part in peaceful protests demanding free and fair elections.

After completing his initial sentence Mikalai Statkevich was not released, as while in jail he was subjected to a further trial, without legal representation, and handed a new prison sentence. Since then, it has emerged that there has been yet another closed trial and a further sentence imposed on him. The conditions in the prison are reported to be appalling and Statkevich is not allowed any contact with his lawyer or his wife, Marina Adamovich, who has relentlessly demanded information on the state of her husband. Not only Mikalai Statkevich is being held in such conditions and with repeat sentences, so are many other democratic activists including several so-called "protest candidates" whose presidential election registrations were refused, among them Veronika Mishchanka, Volha Mikalaichyk and the blogger Sergey Tikhanovskaya; and other jailed activists including numerous Narodnaya Gramada members, and the presidential candidate Viktor Babariko, a former head of Belgazprombank.

At the closure of the registration process for election candidates to the presidency on 19 June, Narodnaya Gramada informed us that a total of seven candidates had filed the necessary documents and that several of those on the list are registered by the regime and are not genuine opponents to Lukashenko. The ensuing protests against Alexander Lukashenko resulted in a violent crackdown with hundreds being brutally arrested and held incommunicado.

Yesterday, 25 June, as the repression continued, the Secretary General of Narodnaya Gramada, our comrade Sergey Sparish, was violently seized by agents of the government from his apartment and as at this moment his whereabouts are unknown.

The Socialist International strongly denounces these barbarous actions by the dictatorial regime of Lukashenko and reiterates its call for the release of all political prisoners and for the holding of free and fair elections in Belarus.



SI calls for the immediate release of Mikalai Statkevich

2 July 2020

Mikalai Statkevich is being accused of committing a crime under Part 1 Article 342 of the Criminal Code of Belarus, by organising actions that violate public order. Statkevich is the leader of the SI member party in Belarus, Narodnaya Gramada, and is co-chair of the Socialist International Committee for the CIS, Caucasus and Black

Sea. In 2010, as a presidential candidate, he was jailed for taking part in a peaceful protest and condemned to a five year prison sentence in very harsh conditions.

Having prevented Statkevich from registering as a presidential candidate in the upcoming elections scheduled for 9 August, citing his prison sentence in 2010 as the reason, Alexander Lukashenko, the head of the authoritarian regime in Belarus, clearly intends to keep him behind bars.

On 30 June, while in prison since May 31, he was granted a 10-15 minute interview with his lawyer, Uladzimir Sazanchuk, who reported that Statkevich categorically rejected the accusations as absurd and pointed out that he did not commit any crime. The persecution of Statkevich takes place in the midst of a violent crackdown against political opponents with hundreds of arrests, developments which the SI has firmly protested against. The Socialist International has kept in touch with Marina Adamovich, the wife of Mikalai Statkevich, and with his comrades in the party leadership since his arrest on May 31 and has closely followed and vigorously protested against the violent abductions and arrests of other members of the party, as in the case of its secretary general, Sergey Sparish.

The release of all political prisoners and the holding of free and fair elections in Belarus must be a shared priority for all democrats worldwide today, after the many years that the Lukashenko regime has kept power suffocating the freedoms and rights of the Belarussian people.

SI rejects and condemns new steps by Maduro to eliminate opposition political parties

8 July 2020

Original: Spanish

As previously denounced by the Socialist International, Nicolás Maduro and his regime have continued to implement their plan to eliminate the opposition political parties, the only democratic pillars that remain under the authoritarianism and dictatorship that reign in Venezuela.

After having ordered his subordinates in the Supreme Court of Justice of Venezuela - which complies with each and every one of Maduro's instructions - to intervene and install operators of his trust and who are loyal to his regime in the leadership of Acción Democrática, a member party of our International, and then the First Justice party, also from the democratic world, the same was done yesterday with the party Voluntad Popular, also a member of our organization, whose trajectory and democratic commitment along with that of its leader, Leopoldo López, are widely known and is the party to which the President of the National Assembly, Juan Guaidó, belongs.

Maduro's strategy of trying to eliminate, one by one, the democratic parties by transferring their leadership to followers of his regime or to those who are seeking positions from his hand, will never be recognized by true democrats or by the international community. Today what is known and shared throughout the world is the pain of the Venezuelans, of those who have lost relatives in the repression, of those who are today unjustly imprisoned or persecuted, of the sick without aid in these times of pandemic, of the emigrants, of those who are exiled or displaced who wish to return to their country and of all those who are suffering the harsh consequences of the authoritarianism and chronic shortages in the country.

The only path and alternative, as we also hear from our comrades in Venezuela, is that of freedom, of respect for the rights of all, and for democracy. The intents by those responsible in the regime to maintain power through authoritarianism, behind the backs of its citizens and by

the hand of repression, only bring more pain, poverty and misrule. Only free and fair elections, as soon as possible, with the full participation of all those who respect the rules of democracy, can open the doors to a government for all, that prioritises life, defeats poverty and guarantees the liberties and rights of all Venezuelans.



Srebrenica - SI marks 25th anniversary

11 July 2020

Solidarity with Beirut and the people of Lebanon

6 August 2020

The Socialist International is deeply shocked and saddened by the devastation and loss of life caused by the massive explosion in the port of Beirut on Tuesday 4 August. As a result of the blast, at least 135 people have been killed, with several thousand injured and more than 300,000 displaced or made homeless. The extent of the material damage is vast, with buildings across half of the city destroyed, including residential areas, hospitals and important infrastructure in the port and surrounding areas. The scale of the devastation is truly dreadful, and the SI expresses its full solidarity with the people of Beirut and Lebanon and all those affected, including the SI-member Progressive Socialist Party (PSP) and its members.

This disaster could not have come at a worse time for Lebanon. The country currently faces overwhelming challenges on multiple fronts as it confronts an economic and financial crisis that has seen its currency massively devalued and half the country sink into poverty, exacerbated by corruption and political mismanagement, for which the government must face up to its responsibilities. Lebanon continues to host the largest number of refugees per capita in the world, the majority of whom have fled the civil war in neighbouring Syria. All of the country's economic, political and social problems have furthermore been exacerbated and amplified by the global pandemic in recent months, leaving it ill-equipped to deal with the aftermath of devastation on this scale.

International assistance for Lebanon will therefore be crucial if it is to overcome this catastrophe, and the SI calls for immediate and significant support from the international community. The immediate priority must be to prevent further suffering and loss of life by locating survivors, treating the injured and providing for the many people who now need shelter and food. In the months ahead, great investment will be needed to rebuild the city and the livelihoods of all those impacted. The SI is encouraged by the pledges of aid and quick

mobilisation of resources from all corners of the globe. It urges all countries and organisations that are in a position to do so to pledge and deliver the targeted aid that will be crucial to Beirut's recovery.

It is self-evident that this tragedy should never have been allowed to happen, and a full investigation is required in order to establish how and why 2,750 tonnes of the chemical ammonium nitrate were stored for years in the port of Beirut despite repeated warnings about the severe danger from such a potent explosive. This should take place with international involvement and transparency in order that those responsible can be held to account.

To overcome this event will require extraordinary amounts of compassion, cooperation and determination, as has been witnessed in the middle of the unfolding tragedy, when the citizens of Beirut offered each other assistance at their time of greatest need. The city has previously confronted severe hardships and we look forward to the re-emergence of a vibrant Beirut and to returning to a place where our organisation has held many significant and successful meetings. The thoughts of the Socialist International and all of its member parties are with the people of Beirut today and we will continue to stand alongside them through this difficult and challenging time.

Belarus: SI rejects announced election results and condemns police violence

10 August 2020

The Socialist International rejects the announced results in the Belarusian presidential election and strongly condemns the use of violence against protestors across the country. It calls for the release of all political prisoners, the organisation of free and fair elections with independent vote monitoring and for sanctions against those responsible for state sponsored violence and violations of human rights.

The SI has been closely engaged with the situation in Belarus for many years, supporting the democratic forces in that country, including its member party, Narodnaya Hramada. Throughout this period, members of opposition parties have been systematically persecuted and the regime has sought to curtail Belarusians' democratic rights and prevent any democratic challenge to the regime by imprisoning prospective opposition candidates and disqualifying them from participating in the elections on fabricated charges. Those subject to arbitrary detention and sentencing include the leader of Narodnaya Hramada, Mikalai Statkevich, its secretary general Sergey Sparish, and other party members.

In the weeks and months leading up to the presidential election on 9 August, the persecution of political opponents by the Lukashenko regime intensified. Criminal prosecutions have been conducted against members of the opposition and members of their campaign teams. In the days up to and including election day, key collaborators of opposition presidential candidate Svetlana Tikhanovskaya were arrested, a response to the overwhelming popular support shown for the key message of the Tikhanovskaya campaign, which centres on the holding of proper, free and fair elections within six months.

The rallies, demonstrations and popular protests across the country show that the Belarusian people are tired of being denied their democratic rights. Despite the clear strength of public feeling, the results presented by the electoral commission gave over 80% of the votes to Lukashenko. It is beyond doubt that yesterday's polls did not meet any standards for free and fair elections, a fact that is underlined by the lack of an independent judiciary or independent

vote monitoring. The results of the presidential election have no credibility or legitimacy, and the SI calls on democracies around the world to reject this fabrication.

The SI fully supports the rights of all Belarusians to peacefully express their rejection of these illegitimate election results, and abhors the use of violence by the police against protesters. Human rights groups in the country have reported hundreds of arrests, dozens of injuries and the death of one person during the police crackdown. The people of Belarus want an end to 26 years of increasingly authoritarian and dictatorial rule by the regime of Lukashenko and their voices must be heard.

The Lukashenko regime has engaged in authoritarian and anti-democratic practices with impunity for many years, in part as a result of the lifting of sanctions despite a lack of progress on democracy and human rights, and the lack of a concerted international effort to bring about positive change. Now more than ever, it is incumbent on the international community to defend human rights, democracy and fundamental freedoms in Belarus. As protests continue under the threat of renewed state violence, it is imperative that democratic governments exert maximum pressure on the regime in order to avoid further bloodshed. This should include making those responsible for the severe violations of human rights during the protests subject to sanctions and holding them to account for their actions.

The Socialist International once more expresses its full solidarity with all those working to end authoritarianism and bring democracy to Belarus. It will continue to work together with democratic forces in the country, including its member party Narodnaya Hramada, as they strive for a better, democratic future with full respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. We urge the international community to show their solidarity with the democratic opposition, and the courageous individuals who are struggling in the face of authoritarianism, oppression and persecution to bring an end to the dictatorial government of President Lukashenko.

SI condemns military coup in Mali

19 August 2020

The Socialist International strongly condemns the mutinous actions taken by members of the Malian armed forces yesterday, as they detained the democratically elected leaders of the country and subsequently forced the resignation of President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita.

The SI will never accept the overturning of democratic election results by force. It urges the immediate and unconditional release of all the detained members of the Malian government and the return of the democratic and constitutional order in the country. This illegal action will only serve to exacerbate the current political crisis in Mali. The only viable way forward is for all parties to engage in the ongoing process of mediation and reconciliation, as the Malian government has shown willingness to do.

President Keita, of the SI-member RPM, has been a longstanding champion of the values of social democracy who has put these principles into practice in office. Under his leadership, advances have been made in peace and reconciliation with rebel groups, strengthening security forces in the fight against terrorism and improving the living conditions of all Malians. It is therefore a grave concern that this illegitimate action will seriously compromise stability and hinder efforts in Mali and the Sahel region to address the concurrent challenges of terrorism, human trafficking and transnational organised crime.

The SI urges the continued support of Mali's international and regional partners for the democratic and constitutional order in that country. It is imperative that civilian rule is

restored to Mali as soon as possible and that its democratically elected leaders can once more take up their roles. During these developments, the Socialist International Secretary General has kept in close touch with the President of the RPM in Mali and Chair of the SI Africa Committee, Bokary Treta. The SI stands in solidarity with President Keita and his government, its member parties in Mali, RPM and ADEMA-PASJ, and the Malian people at this challenging time for democracy in that country.

SDP election of Sanna Marin in Finland

24 August 2020



The Socialist International warmly congratulates Sanna Marin, Prime Minister of Finland, who was elected the new leader of SI member the Finnish Social Democratic Party, at their 46th party congress in Tampere, 22 – 24 August.

Marin is the third female Prime Minister of Finland and the youngest Prime Minister in Finland's history. Appointed in December 2019, she was preceded by former SDP leader Antti Rinne. Sanna Marin was elected to parliament in 2015, and whilst there was a member of the

Grand Committee, Legal Affairs Committee and the Environment Committee. She is also a member of Tampere City Council, which she chaired from 2013 to 2017, and, in 2019, she took the role of Minister of Transport and Communications. Sanna Marin's election as SDP party leader places her second female chair in its history. The SDP held a successful party congress, recognising that greater international cooperation is needed now more than ever due to the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as the urgent need to tackle climate change and eradicate poverty, among many other vital policy issues.

Statement of the Socialist International to mark the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations

21 September 2020



Today, as the UN General Assembly holds a special session to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the United Nations, the Socialist International, the global democratic socialist and social

democratic political family and a firm advocate of the founding principles of the UN, once more reinforces its firm commitment to the goals for which the United Nations was created. This

milestone is an opportunity to reflect on the achievements and history of the UN, recognise the challenges it faces today and look towards the future, ensuring that its crucial work will continue to benefit future generations for many years to come.

Recognising achievements

The UN was founded in the aftermath of World War II, and has from the very start represented the hope and aspiration that such horrors would never again be inflicted by or upon humanity. For more than seven decades it has been a symbol of what can be achieved when countries come together, acting as a catalyst for decolonisation, promoting sustainable international development and mitigating conflicts. The use of the good offices of the UN to prevent and resolve conflicts has undoubtedly saved a great many lives, and this work continues after the cessation of hostilities through the UN peacekeeping operations.

Since its inception, the UN has stood up for some of the most vulnerable people in the world. Many hundreds of millions of people have directly benefited from its initiatives and the work of its various agencies, including those who have received humanitarian assistance in the form of food, refuge, healthcare and vaccinations. In the area of democracy, it provides assistance to countries in the holding of elections and on human rights. The adoption of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights has been the catalyst for a rich body of internationally binding human rights treaties representing the universal recognition that basic rights and fundamental freedoms are inherent to all human beings and equally applicable to everyone.

We also recognise that the UN and its organs are made up of individuals from all nations and all walks of life, working each day with a commitment and a dedication to fostering cooperation between peoples and advancing the values enshrined in the UN Charter. In many conflict zones around the world, UN peacekeepers have a key role in maintaining ceasefires and defending civilian populations and we pay tribute to those who have served under the UN flag in the service of peace.

Confronting challenges

The history of the UN has not been without setbacks, and it continues to face many challenges. Armed conflicts, insecurity and terrorism continue to claim lives, destabilise countries and regions and hinder development. There is still a long way to go before poverty and hunger can be eradicated, and inequality between and within societies continues to grow. Anti-democratic regimes still persist in many countries, and the process of ending human rights violations and bringing their perpetrators to justice is slow and complex. Likewise, finding international consensus on difficult yet crucial issues such as climate change, where compromise is required from all sides, is never straightforward

The UN as an organisation is a point of reference throughout the entire world. It needs to be able to operate in every country and requires the trust and cooperation of national governments, local institutions and citizens. We support all efforts to enhance the ability of the organisation to be more inclusive, to foster greater international cooperation across the globe, and to collectively respond to the new and complex challenges the world faces today.

Isolationism and divisions between nations continue to impact the ability of the UN to operate effectively, when its work is needed more than ever. It must be defended against challenges from those who seek to diminish and undermine it for narrow reasons of self-interest. The current power structure of the UN still allows those with the most historical political and military power to exert disproportionate influence, a situation that can limit the capacity of the UN to act and lead to a sense of unfairness and frustration. Compromise and concessions will be required in order to bring about change in a manner that is acceptable to all parties.

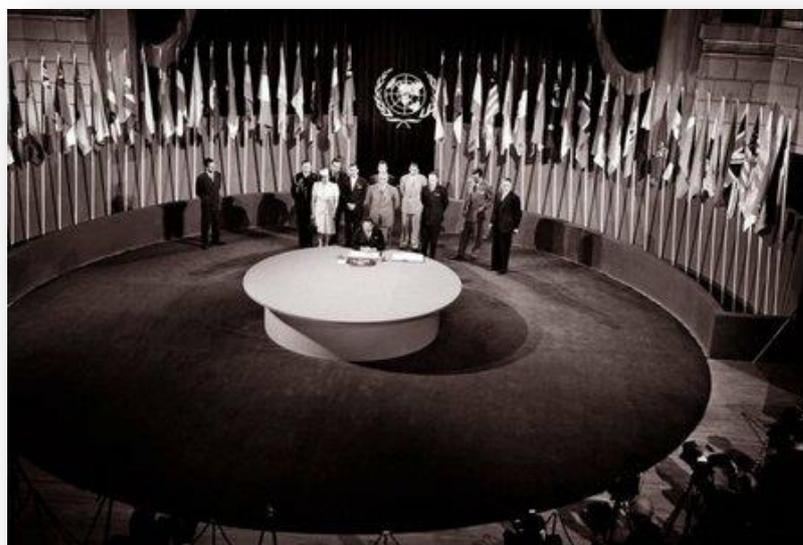
The current pandemic has exposed some of these fault lines and differences at a time when closer cooperation is needed, as a number of countries have taken a nationalistic approach in attempting to secure supplies of personal protective equipment and anti-viral drugs, with others trying to ensure priority access to a potential future COVID-19 vaccine. However, the devastating effect of the pandemic, and its negative impact on every country in the world, shows us that nationalism cannot be the answer. As long as the virus continues to exist and be spread anywhere in the world, it is a problem for the entire world, making concerted and coordinated international action vital. Global public opinion is overwhelmingly in favour of multilateralism, with this support increasing since the pandemic.

Facing the future

The United Nations must continue to play a central role in building a better future for all peoples. From a development perspective, the coming Decade of Action to realise Agenda 2030 is an immense undertaking that has the potential to transform the lives of many hundreds of millions of the most vulnerable people on the planet. At the heart of this agenda are the Sustainable Development Goals, which encapsulate many of the policies for which our organisation has campaigned over many years and which governments led by UN member parties have sought to enact. The empowerment and equal participation of women is a key to achieving sustainable development, and an important reason why action taken by the UN to promote gender equality should be accelerated.

On the specific and ever increasing threat of catastrophic and irreversible climate change, more determined action is needed in order to implement and go beyond the measures contained in the Paris Agreement. Only within the framework of the United Nations has it been possible to negotiate legally binding obligations for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and implementing other climate change reduction measures.

The promotion of peace and work on conflict prevention and resolution will similarly continue to be an essential mission of the UN. As the nature of armed conflicts changes, we must redouble efforts to ensure enforcement and enhancement of measures such as international arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament. Another key objective is the strengthening of international law and justice in order to end impunity, bring to justice those guilty of violations of human rights and offer protection to their victims.



The principles that define the identity of our political family are at the heart of what the United Nations stands for and was created to accomplish. Our calls for more environmental protection, less conflict and more respect for human rights are echoed in the results of the UN75 survey, where those concerns were given the highest priority by a quarter of a million people surveyed in 193 countries. The values of the UN are our values and its 75th anniversary an occasion for celebration, reflection and a renewed focus on the future role of the UN.

As we commemorate this anniversary it is clear that the work of the United Nations and its organs remains fundamental to our hopes and aspirations for a better world. In the face of the great challenges of today – from inequality to pandemics and from climate change to conflict – we believe that the past 75 years have shown us the value of multilateralism.

Our vision of multilateralism is one of cooperation among citizens, peoples and between nations. It is a future in which in the name of sustainability, the finite resources of the world are protected and fairly distributed and the burden of climate action is shared. It requires humanitarianism on a global scale, ensuring that the victims of disease, natural disasters and conflicts are not left to suffer. It is a prerequisite for a more peaceful future where disputes are solved through negotiation and diplomacy, and governments unite to confront and overcome threats to our common security. We are encouraged by the focus on the role of global cooperation in building a better future and fully endorse the reaffirmation of the collective commitment to multilateralism – for the future we want and the UN we need.

Socialist International calls for immediate ceasefire over Nagorno-Karabakh

28 September 2020

The Socialist International is deeply concerned at the outbreak of a new military confrontation between Armenia and Azerbaijan over Nagorno-Karabakh and is particularly saddened and dismayed by the loss of civilian life.

There is no military solution to this conflict. It would only lead to greater suffering, more loss of life, and further escalation of violence, which can never and should never be the way forward, as has been tragically proven in the past.

We add our voice to the calls for an urgent ceasefire and call on the Minsk Group co-chairs to undertake immediate efforts with and between the parties with a view to de-escalating the military confrontation.

Negotiations should be undertaken with the support of the international community to agree a ceasefire, while other states should refrain from further escalating the conflict by intervening or contributing militarily, whether directly or indirectly.

The Socialist International has long been engaged in the search for a peaceful outcome to this conflict, and on different occasions has brought together representatives of its member parties in Armenia and Azerbaijan in our meetings and in their countries, to foster dialogue and contribute towards a solution. We will continue to be committed on this path until both countries reach a peaceful agreement.

Deep concern over assassinations of political, social and human rights workers in Colombia

13 October 2020

The Socialist International is deeply concerned to hear of the growing number of assassinations of social leaders and human rights workers taking place in Colombia, and calls for immediate attention to halt these killings and to protect those who are vulnerable.

The assassinations, which have been highlighted by Amnesty International, the Alianza Verde de Colombia, the media, and other human rights organisations, have specifically targeted social and political leaders and people working for the rights of the poor, indigenous, Afro-descent communities, women and other minorities, as well as community workers who have campaigned against local corruption. The Electoral Observation Mission of Colombia have reported that, in 2020, at least 81 social, political and community leaders have been assassinated, and that out of 248 reported acts of violence this year, 50% of the victims were social activists. This is not a new occurrence and, although the numbers did decrease slightly after the 2016 peace agreement, these assassinations have been taking place for some years with concerning figures. In the first month of this year, the number of deaths was more than double of those in the same months of 2019. The COVID-19 pandemic has worsened the situation, with those vulnerable reporting they feel they are easier to target during quarantine measures and therefore much more at risk, and that support, public attention and investigation has been much harder to achieve.

The Socialist International has a long history of working and engagement with Colombia, where we count with the Liberal Party of Colombia as a member, and is proud to have also participated in the process that led to the M-19 Peace Treaty in 1990. At our last Congress, held in Cartagena in 2017, we welcomed the steps the country had taken under the government of the time led by President Santos to advance peace, social security and health, diversity and progress. The International calls for an investigation into these murders in order to find those responsible and to ensure that all those vulnerable are well protected. It is always the mandate of governments to protect the rights of every person regardless of race, belief or political preference, and this must be upheld by law.

The members of the SI Presidium from all continents convened for an online meeting

24 October 2020





The SI Presidium, the leadership body of the Socialist International, met online on 24 October 2020 with participants from all continents and across multiple time zones. The discussions and contributions focused on the global and local impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and the social democratic response to the global situation resulting from the spread of the virus and its aftermath. The Presidium also discussed latest national and regional developments in relation to existing challenges to democracy and how to face the threats to peace and security in different parts of the world, building common positions on current open conflicts.

The Presidium agreed on the issuing of a communiqué, resulting from the meeting's discussions and from subsequent consultations, published on 28 October (see full text below).

Communiqué of the SI Presidium

28 October 2020

The Coronavirus pandemic

The Coronavirus pandemic is the greatest threat to public health and economic stability for a generation, and requires a response that is based on international cooperation, solidarity and fairness. Though the virus does not discriminate on the grounds of nationality, race, wealth or social status, due to the structural inequalities between and within our societies it is having a disproportionate impact on the most vulnerable, both in regard to potential exposure to the virus and the economic impact of its spread and the measures taken to combat it. It is therefore imperative that the steps taken to mitigate the virus take into account these inequalities, and that those who have been most affected are given the support to rebuild their lives and livelihoods.

The pandemic has brought increased urgency to a number of social democratic priorities, increasing the importance of policies that the Socialist International has long advocated. These include reforms to the financial system in order to ensure that, unlike during the financial crisis of 2008, the burden of the recovery is distributed fairly. Measures must be taken to cut down on tax evasion to ensure that huge multinational companies pay their fair share of taxes. A tax on financial transactions has the potential to raise vast sums that can be used to alleviate the economic damage already caused and facilitate enhanced access to healthcare.

Key to reducing and eventually eliminating the threat of this virus in the medium to long term will be ensuring access to vaccines for the entire world. The rapid spread of Covid-19 has exposed the vulnerability of our interconnected societies to contagious diseases and it is a fact that as long as the virus remains uncontrolled in one part of the world, it is a threat to the entire planet. International solidarity and a commitment to multilateralism, within the framework of the UN and the WHO, will be crucial in order to both ensure fair access to vaccines and to put in place the infrastructure to deliver vaccinations in countries and regions where the capacity of existing healthcare systems is limited.

The pandemic has also indirectly led to the exacerbation of existing social and political problems, and concerted efforts are needed to correct a number of troubling negative developments. Among these is the rise in domestic violence and violence against women during a time when large proportions of the global population have been living under lockdowns and similar restrictions. More must be done to eliminate the scourge of violence against women and to ensure that women are not left out or left behind during the process of rebuilding the world economy. The situation of refugees has also worsened, due to the deteriorating conditions and a shortfall in solutions for displaced persons. Another cause for concern is the evidence that a number of governments have been using the pandemic as a pretext to restrict freedoms and weaken democracy, which continues to face diverse challenges in different regions of the world.

Democracy

The ongoing repression of peaceful demonstrators in Belarus following the illegitimate election results in August is unacceptable. Belarusians continue to take to the streets in their struggle for democracy and the right to choose their government, and do so with the full support of the global social democratic movement. The Belarusian opposition now has hope, with their values having been shown to be those of the majority, and their demands for change must be heard. We reiterate our call for the release of Mikalai Statkevich, the leader of our member party in Belarus, as well as the release of all the other political prisoners being held under detention by the regime.

The catastrophic political, financial and social situation in Venezuela has led to millions of citizens being forced to flee the country in inhumane conditions. Power has been stolen by the authoritarian regime of Nicolás Maduro, and needs to be returned to the people, but the conditions do not exist for free and fair elections to take place. The parliamentary elections scheduled for December have no credibility as clearly demonstrated by the overwhelming rejection by the international community of the conditions in which they would be held.

Democratic setbacks are a cause for concern in a number of other countries, including Pakistan, where opposition parties are being victimised by the government. In Cameroon, violence continues and the conditions do not exist for the free and fair holding of the forthcoming regional elections. The process of democratisation in Haiti is deadlocked, with a breakdown in the rule of law and the risk of falling into a dictatorship. The multitude of challenges to establishing and defending democracy on all continents are a reminder of the vital importance of international cooperation and for democratic governments to take a stand against increasing anti-democratic practices and a trend towards authoritarianism.

The process of rewriting the constitution of Chile is a seminal moment in the democratic history of the country, as it takes steps to consign the Pinochet-era constitution to the past. The SI congratulates the people of Chile and all those who have made possible the holding of this historic plebiscite.

Peace and conflict resolution

The continued conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan in and around Nagorno-Karabakh is deeply concerning. Upon the outbreak of the military confrontation last month, the SI called for an immediate ceasefire, convinced that only through dialogue and peaceful negotiation can this conflict be resolved. We also called from the outset for other states to refrain from further escalating the conflict by intervening or contributing militarily, whether directly or indirectly. Any third party involvement in the military confrontation is condemnable and must be stopped. We call once more for the co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group to persist in their efforts for meaningful negotiations, and the international community at large to play their part to bring peace and stability to the region.

The SI continues to support the two-state solution to the Middle East conflict, and reiterates its support for its member parties in Israel and Palestine who are dedicated to making this happen. The right of the Palestinian people to self-determination must continue to be defended, and the international community must firmly reject any plans that involve the expansion of settlements and the annexation of Palestinian territory, which risks permanently losing the opportunity for peace.

The security crisis in the Sahel continues to require the attention of the world, in particular in light of coup d'état in Mali and the invasion of its territory by extremists. The weakening of democracy and increased insecurity go hand in hand, and the international efforts to support peace and democracy in the region must continue. In a regional security context the developments in Libya will play a critical role and the SI will continue to closely follow the situation there.

Escalating tensions between Greece and Turkey, taking place amid existing disputes in the Eastern Mediterranean, are of current concern. As expressed in the SI statement of 26 October, a restart of exploratory talks between Greece and Turkey, a show of the political will to resolve disputes through constructive dialogue and diplomacy, will provide a signal for the peaceful resolution of conflicts in the wider region. The SI supports the proposal for a multilateral conference on the Eastern Mediterranean to facilitate shared solutions and mutual cooperation.

SI declaration on the plebiscite in Chile

25 October 2020



On Sunday, October 25, more than seven million Chileans went to the polls to decide if they wanted to keep the existing Constitution or if they preferred to have a new constitution drawn up. Regarding the path for change, they were asked about their preference for an assembly wholly elected for such purposes or a mixed body composed in equal parts of

sitting parliamentarians and elected representatives with a constituent mandate. The result that became known that same Sunday afternoon was clear and eloquent: almost 80 percent of voters favoured a new constitution and a Constitutional Convention. Despite the COVID-19 restrictions that marked the elections, the electoral process was carried out with total

normality and in a climate of optimism, citizen participation was higher than in the last elections and a significant presence of young people was evident, who when the results were known they went out en masse and peacefully to celebrate in the streets of Santiago and other cities in the country.

Sunday's election takes place exactly one year after the massive demonstrations that were carried out throughout Chile and that demanded the consecration and assurance of social rights, higher levels of equality, inclusion and social protection, the end of abuses, and dignified treatment for everybody. In historical and political terms, for many Chileans these elections put an end to the Constitution imposed by the dictatorship forty years ago, which despite having undergone important reforms during the democratic transition, never ceased to be perceived by large sectors of the country as a legacy of the dictator Pinochet and an attempt to enshrine the neoliberal model in Chile.

The Socialist International congratulates its member parties and the Chilean people for this significant step and trusts that the constituent process will live up to the demands and expectations of the people, allowing them to reiterate their democratic vocation, their rejection of dictatorship and definitively leave behind a constitution from another era, one of the darkest in the history of the country.

Escalating tensions in the Eastern Mediterranean

26 October 2020

The situation in the Eastern Mediterranean has become a great concern, with existing conflicts and proxy wars already causing a humanitarian crisis, and the escalating tensions between Turkey and Greece signalling further risk. A military confrontation would have disastrous consequences, both for the two neighbouring states and their people, and the wider region.

Such an eventuality poses an even greater threat today, at a time when the world is facing the COVID-19 emergency. We recall the recent statement of the UN Secretary General António Guterres, who warns that the pandemic is having profound social, economic and political consequences, including international peace and security.

The Socialist International expresses great concern over these growing tensions, and inflammatory public rhetoric, which leads to further escalation and the risk of a fatal accident.

In this context, it is crucial to work together, with members of our International family and likeminded political forces in both Greece and Turkey, in order to send a strong message that citizens in the region wish to resolve existing conflicts peacefully.

In times of a dangerous pandemic, we must prioritise increasing inequality, the climate crisis, and population movements. These issues demand global cooperation, and make regional cooperation imperative.

A restart of exploratory talks between Greece and Turkey, a show of the political will to resolve disputes through constructive dialogue and diplomacy, will provide a signal for the peaceful resolution of conflicts in the wider region of the Eastern Mediterranean.

The SI also supports the proposal for a multilateral conference on the Eastern Mediterranean, which will contribute to the resolution of issues related with maritime borders, exclusive economic zones, and gas exploration. This Conference must further pave the way towards cooperation on renewable energy and a regional New Green Deal.

A welcome victory for Biden in the USA

7 November 2020



The Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden has surpassed the threshold of votes in the Electoral College to win the US presidential election. In addition, the former vice-president received the largest number of votes ever cast for a presidential candidate in US history. Thus, the majority of American people have chosen building consensus and empathy over animosity and division. We congratulate the president-elect Joe Biden, his

running mate Kamala Harris, and the Democratic Party on their successful campaign.

In a record-breaking election, voter turnout reached unprecedented levels. The increased participation in the democratic process by the American people is one of the outstanding features of these elections, and electoral authorities across the country should also be commended for their dedication to ensuring that all valid votes were counted, in particular in light of the challenges posed by holding an election at the height of the coronavirus pandemic and the unfounded calling into question of the democratic process by the sitting president.

Joe Biden's commitment to governing in the interests of all Americans, regardless of party affiliation, is commendable and contrasts greatly with the outgoing administration.

After four years during which the leadership of the United States followed a narrow approach to key global issues, the announced priorities of the President-elect are a welcome change, with his commitment to tackle and overcome the COVID-19 pandemic, combat climate change, build economic prosperity, secure health care for all, eliminate systemic racism, defend human and women's rights and to strengthen democracy. These are common challenges and cannot be solved by nations working alone.

The victory of Joe Biden offers an opportunity to strengthen multilateralism in a world which greatly needs it for the benefit of all. We social democrats from around the globe are convinced that the outcome of this presidential election will have many positive repercussions for both the USA and for the world, and we wish the president-elect every success.

Solidarity with Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu and the CHP in Turkey

23 November 2020

The Socialist International expresses its full solidarity with Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu, the leader of its member party in Turkey, the Republican People's Party, CHP, who has been subject to threats by a criminal convicted of multiple murders, money laundering and leading an illegal armed group, who had been released from jail in April this year following a penal code change.

The threat came after a speech made by Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu in parliament calling on President Erdogan to undertake true legal reforms, including of the penal code previously introduced enabling committed criminals to be released while maintaining in prison critics of the ruling party, for freedom of expression, and for political imprisonment to be ended.

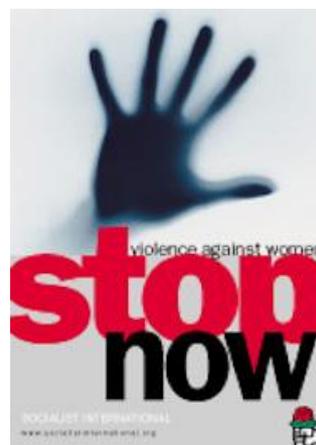
It is deplorable that the leader of the extreme right wing nationalist MHP party, Devlet Bahçeli, an ally of President Erdogan, later defended the criminal publicly.

The CHP has filed a criminal complaint. It also criticised the government's initial silence and delayed response.

The Socialist International underlines its concern that the legal system as well as the government have failed to react properly on such a grave matter which challenges the basic institutions of the state, and looks forward to a substantial response to preserve the rule of law.

International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women

25 November 2020



Victory for President Kaboré in Burkina Faso

27 November 2020



The Socialist International welcomes the news that President Roch Marc Christian Kaboré, leader of the SI member party the People's Movement for Progress, MPP, who was first elected President of Burkina Faso in 2015, has received well above the votes needed to win a second term in the first round of general elections held last Sunday.

The Independent National Electoral Commission, CENI, has confirmed that out of thirteen candidates running for president in this election, President Kaboré received 57.87 percent

of the vote. His closest opponents received just 15.48 and 12.46 percent.

Opposition parties have seven days to file complaints, and courts are required to issue their findings two weeks later. However, Independent National Electoral Commission, CENI, the Economic Community of West African States, ECOWAS, and the African Union, AU, have said the elections were conducted in a satisfactory manner. Reports credit the election as being one of the country's most open in years.

President Kaboré's victory by such a margin in the first round demonstrates the result of his policies to continue on a path of stability, democracy and rights for all. It further strongly underlines the commitment and service he has shown to his country in his first term, as well as

his efforts to bring peace, security and wellbeing to the people. Underscoring this, President Kaboré has said "I will deploy all my efforts so that through continuous consultation, through dialogue... we can work together for peace and development."

This is an important moment for Burkina Faso, and for President Kaboré and our member party the MPP who stand for the common values and principles of our movement, values that have been transforming the face of Burkina Faso and opening new and welcome opportunities for the country.

SI calls for release of CDPA leader in Togo

3 December 2020



Brigitte Kafui Adjamagbo-Johnson

The Socialist International (SI) strongly condemns the arrest of Brigitte Kafui Adjamagbo-Johnson, Secretary General of the SI member party in Togo, the Democratic Convention of African Peoples, (CDPA), currently heading the coalition group Dynamique Monseigneur Kpodrzo (DMK), and of Gérard Yaovi Djossou, DMK member who chairs the committee for social affairs and human rights. The SI demands their immediate and unconditional release.

The DMK had called for a peaceful demonstration in protest at the failure of the government to recognise the victory of the DMK

in the elections held earlier this year, a regime which for over fifty years has been in the hands of one family.

On 27 November, Gérard Yaovi Djossou was taken from the street in Hanoukopé, Lomé, after meeting ambassadors from France, Germany, United States, the European Union, and the United Nations Development Program. He was reportedly badly beaten and endured many hours of interrogation, handcuffed and without access to his lawyer. On 28 November, Brigitte Kafui Adjamagbo-Johnson attempted to visit Yaovi Djossou but was detained by the Central Service of Research and Criminal Investigation (SCRIC), and her home then raided and searched. The SCRIC took documents, notebooks and computers. Adjamagbo-Johnson was subsequently arrested, and later charged with being involved in the 'destabilisation of institutions' in the country and attacking the internal security of the state.

The Socialist International denounces this political persecution and calls for international condemnation of the growing repression evident in Togo. Such aggressive measures are clearly designed to intimidate and silence the opposition and are in this case entirely and blatantly baseless. The preceding years in Togo have seen multiple violations of human rights and arrests of opposition figures, including members of the DMK, as well as reports of the detention and torture of people taking part in peaceful protests.

It is extremely concerning that President Gnassingbé and his party, the Union for the Republic, have de-facto control over institutions such as the Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI), and the Constitutional Court. They also have control of the National Assembly, and in

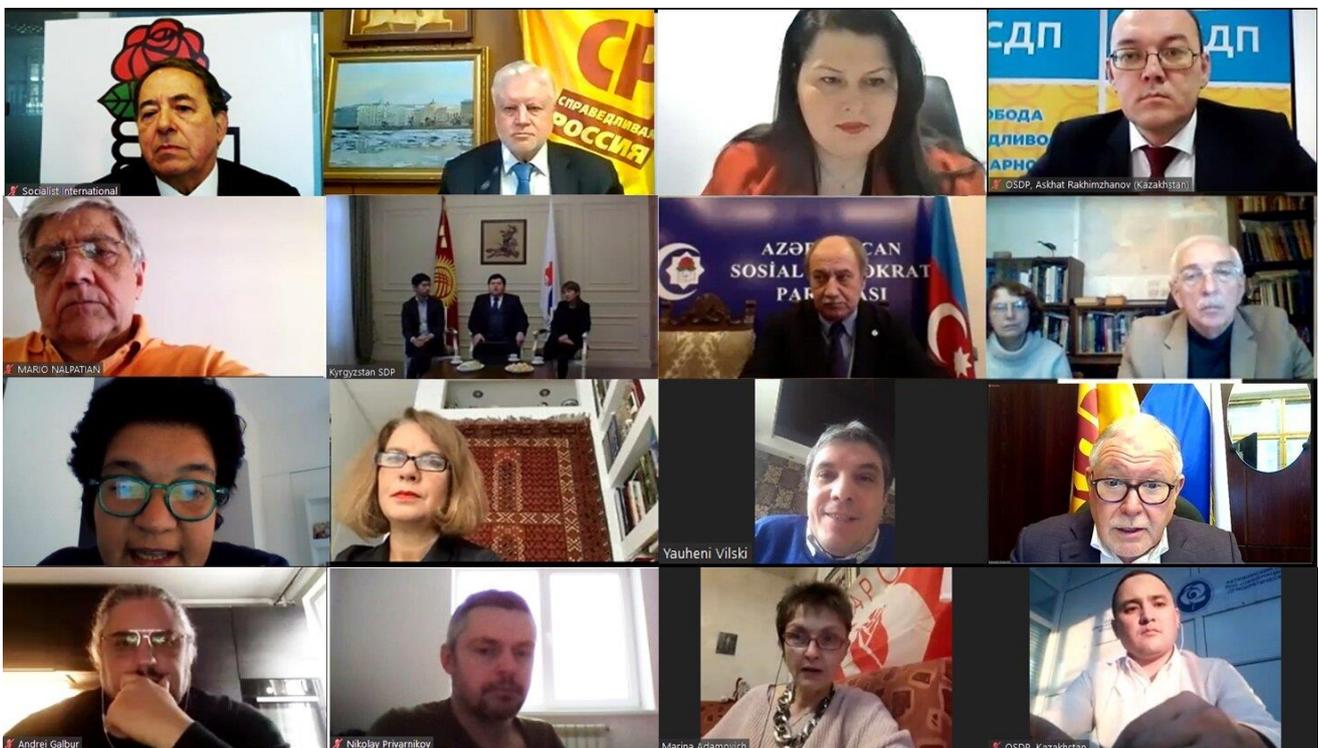
May 2019 they adopted an amendment to the constitution that enabled Gnassingbé to run again in the next two elections.

Brigitte Kafui Adjamagbo-Johnson, who is also a lawyer, is dedicated to working for human rights in Togo and is the first woman to have stood as a candidate in the presidential elections in 2010. These groundless charges against her and her colleague must be immediately dropped, and full access to their legal representation must be given.

The Socialist International reaffirms its full solidarity with Brigitte Kafui Adjamagbo-Johnson and Gérard Yaovi Djossou, with the CDPA, and with all those in Togo who are struggling for their rights, their freedoms, and for democracy.

SI Committee for the CIS, the Caucasus and the Black Sea focuses on key regional issues at virtual meeting

5 December 2020



The Socialist International Committee for the CIS, the Caucasus and the Black Sea held an online meeting on Saturday 5 December 2020, with the participation of member parties from countries across the region. The agenda of the meeting comprised of three main themes, beginning with a presentation of reports on the national situations of member parties, with particular attention given to the impact of Covid-19. The meeting continued with exchanges on the resolution of conflicts and securing peace, followed by contributions on defending and strengthening democracy and its institutions in the countries of the CIS, Caucasus and Black Sea region.

The committee heard accounts of how the pandemic had affected participants, with a number of them having personally suffered from the disease. The diverse approaches taken by countries in the region had significantly affected the spread of the virus and its impact on the population, with countries affected in different ways during the early months of the pandemic

and at the present time. Social democratic priorities for the response to the pandemic, such as access to healthcare, mobilisation of resources to relieve economic hardship and the question of equitable access to vaccines were among the key issues raised during the exchanges.

Sergey Mironov, chair of A Just Russia Party, reported that the situation in Russia remained complex as the country was confronting the second wave without any lockdowns. The pandemic had brought long-term unemployment and social issues, but there was renewed hope due to the imminent start of mass vaccinations with the Sputnik V vaccine which, Mironov underlined, Russia was prepared to share. The virus had touched upon all of humanity but he was confident that it could be overcome by countries working together. His party always supported international relationships and he described the SI as a strong ideological community, expressing confidence that its words would be heard, presenting a common point of view that was particularly needed at the time of the pandemic.

Moldova was facing a state of emergency due to daily increases in the number of cases of Covid-19 in the country. Cristina Lesnic, member of the Executive Bureau of the PDM, underlined the importance of placing the citizens at the centre of the pandemic response and the need for access to medicines and a strengthened medical system. The PDM was working for the implementation of its plan to deal with the pandemic and its impact. Access to proper medical treatment is also a serious problem for Kyrgyzstan, which had not been able to effectively deal with the pandemic, as the former president had not found sufficient funds to enable access to free medical help for citizens or for the establishment of corona hospitals to take care of sick patients, resulting in a disproportionately high death toll. Askhat Rakhimzhanov, chair of the OSDP, Kazakhstan, reported that Kazakhstan had not been spared the suffering caused by the pandemic and strict measures including a lockdown and state of emergency had been introduced. He considered that lessons had been learned from the first wave that meant the country was better prepared for the second.

In contrast, a number of participants reported that the second wave had been more severe than during the spring, among them Gia Jorjoliani, chair of the SDD, Georgia, who considered that the pandemic was exposing serious shortcomings in the ability of the world order to respond to such a crisis. Georgia had coped very well in the spring with a two-month lockdown, but was now among the least successful countries. Another country heavily hit by the second wave was Hungary, as reported by Alexandra Dobolyi, co-chair of the committee, MSzP, where the government was not managing to balance the economy against the consequences of not locking down.

The dangerous lack of response by the Lukashenko regime in Belarus was brought to the attention of the meeting by Yauheni Vilski, first vice-chair of NH, Belarus, who described an administration that considered loyalty more important than health, which meant that anyone who publicly went against government policy would lose their job. The regime had chosen to deny the existence of the pandemic, despite hospitals in Minsk now dealing exclusively with Covid-19 patients.

On the theme of peace and conflict resolution, significant attention was given to the recent conflict in the South Caucasus, and the meeting listened to the perspectives of participants from both Armenia and Azerbaijan on this subject.

Araz Alizadeh, co-chair of the committee and leader of the SDPA, Azerbaijan, described the conflict as a patriotic war which all Azeri political parties had supported, resulting in Armenian forces leaving territory they had occupied for the first time since 1993. Responding to reports of Turkish involvement in the war, he denied the presence of Turkish armed forces in Azerbaijan. His position was that Azerbaijan had not at any point attacked Armenian territory, while Armenia had attacked Ganja to breach the ceasefire of 10 October, a city outside of the

Karabakh region. His position was that the SDPA did not want war, regardless of demands from Yerevan and that a bad peace was better than a 'good' war.

Shaghig Maroukhian, supreme council member of the ARF, Armenia, described the actions of Azerbaijan as a large scale aggression in violation of the tripartite ceasefire that was planned and coordinated with military and political support from Turkey. She accused the government of Azerbaijan of recruiting terrorist mercenaries from Syria and Libya, and of immediately violating two ceasefires agreed during October. The ARF called into question the 10 November ceasefire agreement and supported protests against the Armenian prime minister and the installation of an interim government. Mario Nalpatian (ARF, SI vice-president) considered that a just peace had not been reached, but outlined his party's commitment to the values and principles of the SI and readiness to work for this in the South Caucasus.

In remarks on the resolution of conflicts, SI vice-president Alexander Romanovich (Just Russia) highlighted the personal role of the leaders of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Russia in reaching a ceasefire agreement. He regretted the number of on-going conflicts in the CIS, referring to the situations in Moldova and Ukraine, and expressed his belief that conflicts could only be solved through negotiations with international support from the UN.

On the subject of the conflict affecting Transnistria, Cristina Lesnic outlined that despite a difficult year, the PDM was still focused on a result-oriented approach. She described the isolation of the Transnistria region through the introduction of checkpoints and violations of human rights as unsustainable, calling for a negotiated solution with respect for the integrity of Moldova, human rights and security.

Discussions on democracy took into account the developments since the fraudulent presidential elections in Belarus, which have been rejected by the SI and other international organisations. Marina Adamovich (NH, Belarus) reminded participants that 189 days had passed since the leader of the Narodnaya Hramada and co-chair of the committee, Mikalai Statkevich, had been imprisoned, alongside other electoral candidates, Sakharov prize winners and more than 600 human rights activists. Due to the imprisonment of opposition leaders, Belarusians had been protesting without any leaders, and in the process forming a new Belarusian political nation. It was emphasised that these protests were not to do with choosing between east or west, but an internal Belarusian protest in favour of democracy and respect for human rights.

The democratic challenges faced in Kyrgyzstan were described by Temirlan Sultanbekov (SDP), who outlined the situation leading up to the massive protest and the fall of the previous regime in October. The SDP had been prevented from conducting its campaign during the election that preceded those developments, with severe pressure placed on party members. Following the resignation of former president Jeenbekov, he expressed optimism for the future in which those who had committed crimes will be held to account and all political prisoners released. The party had not sought to seize power during the unrest but was willing to take part in democratic parliamentary elections and then play its role in a coalition or in the opposition.

Askhat Rakhimzhanov (OSDP) reported that in Kazakhstan some changes had taken place that made it easier to form political parties and increase the plurality of opinions in the political sphere. There had also been a special law on gender equality in administrative bodies and party lists and holding demonstrations had also been made easier. He explained the decision taken by the OSDP at its congress to boycott forthcoming elections, as electoral laws had not been amended despite the party's efforts. As the only opposition it had also been subject to a lot of provocation in the previous months, including efforts to take over the party by outside actors.

In concluding remarks, SI secretary general Luis Ayala underlined that the SI had made the resolution of conflicts a part of its identity everywhere and would continue to bring together its member parties in search of common ground, compromise and cooperation. Democracy continued to be a major challenge in the region and he noted that the SI had made efforts to secure the participation of a delegate from Tajikistan, where there was a severe lack of rights, freedoms and democracy, and social democrats faced an extremely difficult situation. We are also reaching out to like-minded friends in Uzbekistan, who are suffering a similar fate. On conflict resolution and human rights, the SI continued to be in touch with the United Nations. He considered that as a political family the SI is truly involved in this region and is getting results. He paid tribute to social democrats across the region who were working for democracy and progress, improving the situation with hard work and perseverance, and expressed his pride that members of this political family were at the forefront of these efforts.

Socialist International denounces illegitimate elections in Venezuela

7 December 2020

The Socialist International once again raises its voice to express its resolute support for and solidarity with the people of Venezuela, and with its democratic forces that have once again seen their freedoms and rights seriously violated by the dictatorial regime of Nicolás Maduro, this time with the illegitimate elections that were held yesterday.

The International rejects these elections carried out without effective and independent international observation, with an electoral power under strict and total official control and with a system of political parties that the Maduro regime has for years been dedicated to attack, co-opt and destroy. Both the call, and the preparation and holding of these elections, have been rejected by a significant number of countries in the region, as well as by the Lima Group, the Organization of American States and the European Union, among others. The main actors of the international community consider that the minimum standards required to carry out a fair, competitive and transparent election have been far from fulfilled, and this can only be described as an unacceptable affront to democracy.

The Venezuelan people have also understood this and have reacted to the electoral farce with massive abstention. With an electoral roll of close to 20.7 million voters, the participation figures on the day reveal an approximate 70 percent abstention. Compared to the previous legislative election, when the opposition won a clear victory, turnout this time fell 40 points. It is paradoxical to note that on the illegitimate day that we have just witnessed, the PSUV and other parties of the official Gran Polo Patriótico coalition who proclaim themselves as winners, obtained two million fewer votes than in the 2015 legislative elections in which they were defeated.

The Venezuelan opposition, led by Juan Guaidó, made a call to not validate the electoral fraud and to not participate in the elections. After the results were published, the president-designate stressed that the majority of Venezuelans had turned their backs on Nicolás Maduro. From the beginning of January 2021, the National Assembly, currently the only public body with democratic legitimacy in the country, could have a new composition as a result of a process called into question both nationally and internationally as spurious.

The Socialist International condemns this new attack on Venezuelan democratic actors and reiterates its deep concern at the political, economic, social and humanitarian crisis affecting women and men, which continues to deteriorate by the day. The SI strongly supports its

member parties and the opposition forces in Venezuela, and will continue to support their tireless efforts for a country in which the rule of law and respect for the freedoms and rights of all its citizens prevail. In view of the millions of Venezuelans who have had to leave their land for political or economic reasons and go into exile, the SI renews its call to the international community to remain active, mobilised and committed to defending full respect for human rights, freedom and democracy in Venezuela.

Virtual meeting of the SI Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean

12 December 2020



On Saturday 12 December 2020, the Socialist International held a meeting of its Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean with the participation of members of the SI Presidium, leaders and representatives of the SI member parties from the region. The discussions included reports on national situations, the impact and consequences of Covid-19, the social and economic challenges in the region, as well as the defence and strengthening of democracy and its institutions throughout the continent.

At the beginning of the meeting, the Committee observed a minute of silence in memory of the recently deceased Honorary President of the Socialist International, Horacio Serpa, who had also previously held the responsibility of vice-president of the organisation, and who was leader of the Colombian Liberal Party. The Committee also remembered Tabaré Vázquez, from the Frente Amplio of Uruguay, who had served two terms as president of the Republic and who sadly passed away in Montevideo some days prior.

In his opening remarks, the Chair of the Committee, Miguel Vargas, stressed that the pandemic had brought important challenges to the countries of the region to which the social democratic forces of the continent - in government or in opposition - must respond with solidarity, guided by the principles of democratic socialism. Promoting public investment, stimulating demand, directly supporting vulnerable groups, increasing spending on scientific research and ensuring timely access to vaccines, among other things, are actions that SI parties in the region should pursue. The pandemic has highlighted the importance of new technologies and the internet as a support for development. Its use in education, remote work and new ventures associated with social networks, can be seen as positive experiences. The unity of our political forces across the continent will help to overcome the crisis of the pandemic and promote the health, economic and social recovery of the region.

The SI Secretary General, Luis Ayala, highlighted that at the global level the Socialist International has been committed to addressing matters of priority: the fight against Covid-19, the defence and strengthening of democracy, facing the rise of populism, the achievement of real social justice in the framework of an economy with environmental and social sustainability, the resolution of conflicts and the work in favour of peace, gender equality, and the solidarity that defines this political family. Regarding these concerns, the SI is working in contact with all its member parties in the different continents. In relation to the global pandemic, the International has insisted on the urgency of having vaccines available to all, as well as quality health services. The search for greater social justice and solidarity within our countries and globally must today also be concretely expressed in our response to the challenges of the pandemic.

At the beginning of the debates, the participants received greetings and a message from Pedro Sánchez, President of the Government of Spain, Secretary General of the PSOE and vice-president of the SI, who highlighted the bond that unites the people of Spain with the region and reiterated his commitment to cooperation. The socialist and social democratic responses to the current crisis, he said, must be oriented in favour of the well-being of all, without allowing for populism or austerity solutions. This was a task that today must unite the forces of the Socialist International.

At the beginning of the Committee's debates it was highlighted that the current crisis will generate the largest global economic contraction since the Great Depression of 1929. According to figures from multilateral organisations, world GDP will experience a decrease of more than 5% this year. In Latin America and the Caribbean, this figure will be close to -9% according to ECLAC estimates and some countries will have particularly worrying contractions, such as the case of Venezuela, whose output is estimated to contract by 26%. The export sectors and the production of raw materials and food will be severely affected in their

production and exchange volumes as well as in their prices. Activities that are especially relevant to some countries in the region, such as tourism, will experience a major blow. This scenario is bringing internal conflicts, increased unemployment and poverty. The responses of the authorities lead to an increase in debt and public spending, which is prompting fiscal deficits to grow in many nations in the region. A social democratic response to the challenge should boost public investment (private investment will also be affected by the uncertainty surrounding the normalisation of health conditions and the restrictions that these entail) and public spending, reactivating employment and household demand. In Latin America and the Caribbean in recent years, governments have been making efforts to reduce national debt and balance fiscal accounts; however, it was stressed that the magnitude of the crisis we are facing forces us to assume the need for smart, efficient and environmentally responsible public spending to promote reactivation in 2021 over the choice of austerity policies. At the same time, it is urgent and essential that countries mobilise resources, bonds and other types of direct aid to the most affected and vulnerable groups; the moment is propitious to strengthen the institutional framework and the benefits of social services in our nations. The region must strengthen integration and cohesion in scientific and educational matters and reinforce action for cooperation for development, both economically and socially.

In addition to a general reflection on the economic situation, the Committee also identified certain economic challenges in view of particular national realities. For example, Paraguay, despite presenting a lower economic contraction than many countries in the region, faces the problem of a strong connection with illicit and criminal activities, and with the collusion – if not participation – of its authorities in them. In Peru, the problem of informality has affected the economy and employment for many years. In the case of Haiti, concern was expressed about the existence of criminal gangs protected by the authorities that ransack property without control in the rural and urban areas of the country, which undermines the economy, the security of its citizens, its institutions and democracy. In Argentina, the severe economic effects of the pandemic have been aggravated by the adoption of particularly restrictive health measures, such as extensive quarantines, which among other factors have left the country with 50% of its population living in poverty.

With regard to democracy in the region, the Committee reiterated the commitment of the SI member parties in Latin America and the Caribbean. The moment makes it necessary to be vigilant in the face of the emergence of authoritarian leaderships and populism that end up undermining democratic coexistence. At the same time, the adoption for political purposes of initiatives disguised as health measures that violate fundamental rights and personal and collective freedoms, was rejected. For restrictive measures to be legitimate, they must be timely, adopted with technical and scientific criteria, well explained to the population, and respectful of the country's institutions.

Members of the Committee expressed their grave concern at national situations in the region where democracy is threatened. The Committee was interested in the situation in Haiti, where President Jovenel Moïse has not called the planned elections and has been governing and legislating by decree, concentrating public powers. The Committee welcomed the efforts of the Haitian opposition parties against the authoritarian drift of the government and their work for unity with a view to demanding free elections as soon as possible and to preventing President Moïse's attempt to modify the Constitution and remain in power beyond February 2021. Peru has found itself outside of democratic normality since the accession to the presidency of Martín Vizcarra in March 2018. The current president, Francisco Sagasti, came to office following a declaration of vacancy removing his predecessor in the month of November and comes from a party with only nine seats in the Peruvian parliament, which makes it foreseeable that he will

experience difficulties in governing the country. The Committee expressed its confidence that the elections on 11 April will be carried out properly, with the participation of all political forces, and will allow Peru to return to democratic normality.

In the Paraguayan case, it was recalled that the Colorado Party has been ruling the country since 1947, with the only exception of the coalition government between 2008 and 2013, which was part of the social democratic political family. Accusations of corruption and criminal acts against Colorado's leaders are a constant that affects Paraguayan democracy, the case of former President Horacio Cartes being the most recent and well-known. The democratic opposition forces, based on the experience of unity with which they faced the last presidential election, must continue to work with confidence with a view to the 2023 elections to achieve the alternation of power and a democratic change in Paraguay. With regard to Bolivia, the Committee analysed the reasons for the recent presidential triumph of MAS candidate, Luis Arce, and the lessons to bear in mind for the future to strengthen the democratic institutions.

In the Committee's opinion, Brazil should be seen in the region as a particularly serious case of how populist policies can quickly, drastically and directly impact people's lives. With more than 180 thousand deaths so far, Brazil is the second worst hit nation in the world in terms of the number of deaths as a result of Covid-19. This dramatic situation is a consequence of the irresponsible policies of President Bolsonaro in health matters. The explicit denial of scientific evidence and reality has generated an unacceptable loss of life and a serious damage to the country's institutions and its democracy. The Committee welcomed the consolidation, after the last municipal elections, of its member party PDT as the first opposition political force and expressed its confidence that progressive proposals will prevail in Brazil and contribute to its sustainable development and that of the region.

As a hopeful sign for the future of democracy in the region, the Committee welcomed the constituent process that is advancing today in Chile, where after the massive demonstrations of a year ago - with demands for a deepening of democracy, respect for social rights and an end to the abuses - there is a climate of broad consensus to replace the text of the Constitution and the model imposed by it during the dictatorship. Eighty per cent of the Chilean electorate opted for a new Constitution, which will be drawn up in an assembly with gender parity and with representation of indigenous peoples, an experience without international precedent. The Committee expressed its support for the Chilean progressive and democratic forces in their work to imprint a new Social State of Law in the new constitutional text, leaving behind the mark of Pinochet and his neoliberal model.

Once again, Venezuela had a central place in the Committee's discussions on democracy in Latin America and the Caribbean. The Committee expressed its rejection of the legislative elections held last Sunday, 6 December, already denounced as illegitimate by the SI and by the international community, and in which an abstention of close to 70% was observed according to official figures. Every day sees a deepening of the very serious political, economic and social problems that have plagued the country for years. The number of Venezuelans fleeing their country is estimated at between five to six million, creating a humanitarian drama and a massive migratory flow, a reality that is particularly complex for neighbouring Colombia. The seizure of power, the destruction of the productive apparatus and infrastructure, and uncontrolled hyperinflation are just some of the manifestations of the magnitude of the crisis in Venezuela. The Socialist International and the international community as a whole must remain firmly involved in supporting the Venezuelan democratic forces in their demand for free, fair and transparent elections, with independent electoral authorities and international observation. The Citizen Consultation (Consulta Ciudadana) convened by the Venezuelan

democratic opposition that coincided with the holding of this Committee meeting should be welcomed and understood as an action in favour of democracy in Venezuela.

For democracy to be strong in Latin America and the Caribbean, it is essential to have solid, legitimate, credible and efficient institutions at the national and regional levels. Countries with robust institutions in Latin America and the Caribbean have been better able to respond to the pandemic and mitigate its consequences. The strength of institutions and the strength of democracy are two realities that go hand in hand. Populist proposals threaten the quality of institutions and end up eroding democratic coexistence.

The Committee listened to Nadia de León Torres (UNE, Guatemala), who read a letter addressed to the delegates by her mother, Sandra Torres, a vice-president of the International, denouncing her judicial persecution for political reasons. Torres appealed to the Committee for the SI to take action on her case to allow her and her party to resume their role in their country. In this regard, the SI Secretary General reminded the Committee that the accusations against the vice-president were presented without grounds or evidence and that one year and three months have passed since charges were filed. This status quo threatens and prevents the regular exercise of Sandra Torres's rights and he proposed that the SI take action to obtain her freedom and identify a group of jurists from within our organization to this end.

During the closing of the meeting, the Committee heard a message from George Papandreou, President of the Socialist International, in which he referred to the many challenges we face today.

SI calls for respect of the democratic process and election results in Romania

14 December 2020

The Socialist International congratulates its member party in Romania, the Social Democratic Party (PSD) on its victory in the general election held on 6 December, after it emerged by a clear margin as the largest party in the parliament. In line with the constitutional norms and practices of Romania, the party should have been given the opportunity to nominate a prime minister and to try to form a government. It is therefore troubling that President Iohannis has taken the unprecedented and anti-democratic step of nominating a member of his own former party, the National Liberal Party (PNL), as interim prime minister.

We call on President Iohannis, who according to the constitution of Romania must remain impartial, to respect the result of the elections by allowing the PSD to nominate a prime minister, instead of imposing the candidate of his choice. This comes after undue intervention by the president in the electoral campaign, during which he was critical of the PSD and supportive of the PNL. In playing such an active role in the campaign he used the presidential office in a manner inconsistent with international standards, as noted by the OSCE electoral assessment mission in its preliminary report.

The process of choosing the next government of the country must be accomplished through free negotiations between the parties elected to the parliament and without interference from the presidency and we expect these democratic norms to be upheld. The Socialist International expresses its solidarity with the PSD and its president, Marcel Ciolacu, as they seek to build a better future for all Romanians and supports the party's efforts to form the next government of Romania in line with the democratically expressed will of the people and the constitutional practices of the country.

The SI protests the sentencing of Loujain al Hathloul in Saudi Arabia

28 December 2020



The Socialist International vigorously protests against the sentencing of Loujain al Hathloul in Saudi Arabia on alleged charges relating to national security under the state's counter terrorism law. Loujain al Hathloul, a women's rights activist, originally made news in 2014 for protesting against the Kingdom's ban on women drivers and its male guardianship laws, for which she was arrested and detained for 73 days. She

was again arrested in 2018 and since then has been held in detention without trial. The sentencing today of nearly six years in prison has rightly provoked outrage internationally.

The Socialist International continues to reaffirm the rights of all women to freedom of expression, to freedom from gender-related discrimination and freedom from the violation of their human rights.

As the SI has stated before, across the world, women have featured prominently in the struggle for freedom and democracy, and continue to play a prominent role in the democratic transitions. They must be afforded the same opportunities, rights and freedoms as men. For a stable, equitable and peaceful society, it is imperative that women's rights and gender equality are respected.

SI deploras assault on democracy in the US

8 January 2021

The Socialist International, the worldwide organisation of social democratic, labour and democratic socialist parties, strongly deploras the systematic attacks on democracy that have taken place by President Donald Trump and his allies since his defeat in the presidential election in November last year, which culminated in the reprehensible assault on the Capitol building by supporters of the outgoing president on Wednesday 6 January. These shocking events have no place in a democracy and have sadly led to at least five deaths, including that of a police officer who lost his life as a result of injuries suffered while carrying out his duties.

It is astonishing, unprecedented and shameful that this mob was directly encouraged by the president to storm the seat of the US legislature, as a joint session of Congress was underway to certify the election of his opponent in the November election, Joe Biden. The direct provocation by Trump, followed by a number of senior members of the Republican Party, in the lead up to the tumultuous events at the Capitol comes on the back of two months during which they have at every juncture tried to undermine the validity of a free and fair election that delivered a resounding victory to President-elect Biden. It has been proven many times over that all the various allegations and conspiracy theories surrounding the electoral process are without merit and lack any legal foundation. Despite this, the president and others have been willing to lie, to distort the truth and subvert democracy in order to stay in power.

Over the past four years, President Trump has consistently shown himself to be unfit for office. This pattern of behaviour was evident even before his election in 2016, as he used campaign

rallies to spread discord and encourage violence. His term of office has led to the emboldening and strengthening of far-right and white supremacist elements in American society, as he has refused to condemn violence and racism and offered support for many of their aims and objectives. The danger of inflammatory rhetoric and the consequences of inciting violence and hatred are plain to see after the events of 6 January. Some of the most troubling images to emerge show the triumphant brandishing of racist symbols such as the Confederate flag within the Capitol building, and violent attacks on the media, who have consistently been vilified by the outgoing president. President-elect Biden has accurately described those involved as domestic terrorists, and they must be identified and prosecuted to the full extent of the law.

The Socialist International has a proud history of working for and speaking up in favour of democracy wherever it is under threat in the world and the events of recent months are a stark reminder that hard-won democratic rights must never be taken for granted. Even after the departure of President Trump from office, the damage done to democracy in the USA will take time and effort to overcome. We wish the incoming administration every success as they begin their work to repair the harm done by his predecessor and are confident that President-elect Biden will govern in the interest of all Americans, strengthen multilateralism and be a positive force both for the USA and for the rest of the world.

A new horizon in the United States

21 January 2021

The assumption of office by Joe Biden and Kamala Harris as the new President and Vice-President of the United States marks a significant turning point for the country and is a welcome moment for the world. Democracy in the United States has delivered a new course, in which the people once again have reaffirmed long held values and principles upon which that nation was built. At this crucial time during which the world is facing unprecedented challenges, the new administration is clearly focused on dealing with priorities recognised by the majority of its people and that are also present today on the agendas of many countries and governments around the globe.

Today's most important priorities converge on combatting and neutralising the virus that has so far ended the lives of over 2 million people, the recovery of national economies, halting the destruction of the environment, implementing humane responses to migration crises, countering racism and discrimination, promoting gender equality, the resolution of conflicts and securing peace and, above all, strengthening democracy and its institutions at a time when they are under threat by populist and authoritarian ideas in different parts of the world.

The executive orders signed by President Biden on the very day he took office, which we strongly welcome, reflect his commitment to these crucial issues and are in stark contrast to his predecessor whose policy was characterised by insularity, hostility and mistrust. They highlight his understanding that only with a common approach will the nations of the world be able to overcome the many global challenges that humanity faces.

The path he has chosen, one of searching for common agreement through multilateralism, is well reflected in his internationally widely applauded decisions to rejoin the World Health Organization and the Paris Climate Accord.

In the battle to prevent catastrophic climate change, President Biden's executive order to rejoin the Paris Accord is a hugely significant move at a time when our planet is facing a climate emergency, and when progress on reducing emissions to limit global warming has been hampered not only by the withdrawal from the agreement by the United States, but also the

delay to COP26 as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. This year is therefore a vital moment for the new US administration and the rest of the world to re-evaluate their nationally determined contributions (NDCs) and strengthen their commitment to new and existing plans for emissions reductions.

The global battle to contain and overcome the Covid-19 pandemic is also an urgent priority and one which will be aided by the commitment by President Biden to rejoin the World Health Organization. The pandemic will continue to be a threat and a problem for all countries as it continues to spread in different parts of the world. The announcement that President Biden will bring the US into COVAX is therefore particularly welcome, as it will enable greater access to vaccines for countries regardless of income levels.

The SI welcomes the announcement that the discriminatory travel ban enacted by the former president in 2017 in order to target predominantly Muslim countries will be repealed as well as the announcement to halt construction of the wall, regularise the situation of over 11 million undocumented migrants in the country and that of the so-called 'dreamers'.

We equally look forward once more to the role of the US as a fully engaged partner for peace, defending human rights globally and prioritising international development after four years of aggressive and threatening rhetoric and concerted efforts to slash development funding. A matter of particular importance is the Middle East, where the one-sided and transactional approach of the previous administration has severely damaged the prospects for a two-state solution and jeopardised long-term peace. In a positive step, President Biden has reiterated his support for the two-state solution and pledged to restore US aid and development funding to the West Bank and Gaza.

The US continues to have an extremely significant global influence in the economic, global and cultural spheres and the consequences of its decisions are felt far beyond its borders. Long-term success for President Biden requires more than simply reversing the worst policies of his predecessor and there are many global challenges ahead that may require the kind of consensus-building that has been severely lacking over the last four years. The Socialist International is encouraged by the early commitments and actions of President Biden and will, together with its member parties, offer its support to multilateral initiatives that are in line with the aims and principles of the social democratic family. We will continue to work for a progressive, democratic and internationalist agenda that can thrive on the global stage.

Djibouti, a country neither free nor democratic

28 January 2021

Djibouti remains today one of the least free and least democratic countries in the world, living under a system of single-party rule that has prevailed since its independence in 1977, and where expected democratic reforms have failed to take place.

In the face of severe challenges, the opposition SI-member Movement for Democratic Renewal (MRD), led by Daher Ahmed Farah, is seeking to advance the democratic and institutional reforms that were agreed as part of a framework agreement signed by the government and the opposition in December 2014, including the establishment of an independent joint national electoral commission. The regime's failure to implement these reforms places Djibouti at odds with the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance, which it has signed and ratified and requires state parties to both establish and strengthen independent and impartial national electoral bodies.

The Socialist International renews its call for the full implementation of the December 2014 framework agreement, including the establishment of an independent joint electoral commission, which is a prerequisite for the holding of a free and fair presidential election in Djibouti in April 2021. We express our solidarity with the MRD and all those in the country working for democracy, individual freedoms and human rights. The international community should bring pressure to bear on the ruling regime so that this year the people of Djibouti will finally be able to freely express their democratic will and elect their president without the fear of fraud and the use of force that have been a permanent feature of previous elections in the country.

SI denounces the arrest of one of the main opposition leaders in Paraguay

29 January 2021

Efraín Alegre, a presidential candidate in the 2018 elections in Paraguay representing a broad coalition of opposition political forces, including the SI member Progressive Democratic Party, PDP, was arrested on the 28th of this month under a pre-trial detention order following an obscure accusation by the regime in power led by the Colorado Party, a political organisation identified for decades with the long dictatorship of General Stroessner and the excesses of abuse and crimes to which it subjected the Paraguayan people. Efraín Alegre, leader of the Authentic Radical Liberal Party, PLRA, who has participated as a guest in meetings of the Council of the Socialist International and its Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean, carried out a notable presidential campaign in the last elections that mobilised the Paraguayan people, bringing together leaders and democratic forces under an agenda of change and progress that had broad citizen and popular support. Amid multiple complaints of irregularities and the absence of objective impartiality by the electoral authority, the candidate of the Partido Colorado was declared elected by a narrow margin.

In the past two and a half years since the elections, Efraín Alegre has become a spokesperson for the feelings shared by the opposition and the daily frustration of the Paraguayan citizens, and a personality who day by day raises the voice and opinion of the Paraguayans who bear the burden and the real cost of growing corruption and of the distance and indifference of a government that serves the interests of a visible and narrow minority. On this occasion, the regime is trying to hold him responsible for an alleged crime of producing a false document to an accounting process in a district of the country, related to gasoline expenses by managers in that region during activities of the last campaign, which in no way concerns him personally, and furthermore, as expressed in the country's legal system, is not the responsibility of a presidential candidate.

It is evident that the Paraguayan government, in the hands of President Mario Abdo of the Colorado Party, has decided to set out to destroy the image and authority of this Paraguayan leader who ranks high in the esteem and appreciation of the people.

This global organisation of social democratic, labour and democratic socialist parties strongly denounces this operation by the Paraguayan regime and demands the immediate release of Efraín Alegre, while at the same time we extend our full solidarity to his family and colleagues from his party, as well as to the different political forces that seek to build a new society, a new country, a new morality and a new destiny that Paraguay longs for and that it needs today.

SI call to respect democracy in Kosovo

29 January 2021

The Socialist International is closely following the situation in Kosovo, where snap parliamentary elections are scheduled for 14 February. In light of recent developments, the SI would urge that all measures are taken by the electoral authorities of the country to ensure that these elections take place with full respect for the principles of democracy and the rights of all voters, candidates and political parties.

The recent years have seen significant change in the political landscape in Kosovo, with new challengers emerging to the parties that had held a grip on power. The SI-member Movement for Self Determination (Lëvizja Vetvëndosje, LVV), has steadily grown in strength since first entering parliament in 2011, and became the largest party at the most recent parliamentary elections in 2019. Polling for the upcoming election, which takes place after a court declared the election of the sitting prime minister by parliament to be illegal, shows a clear lead for LVV, which would put Albin Kurti, the party's candidate for prime minister, in a strong position to be elected to that post.

In the context of the strong public support for LVV, the recent decision by the Central Election Committee (CEC) of Kosovo to ban Albin Kurti and a number of other candidates from LVV from standing in the elections is of considerable concern. This move by the CEC, infringing on the rights of Albin Kurti and others on the LVV list to participate in the election as candidates, is in contradiction to the recommendation of the independent Office for Party Registration and Certification.

The SI calls for the obstacles that have been imposed on its member party, LVV, to be removed in order to allow the people of Kosovo to freely express their will and elect the parties and candidates of their choice. We express our solidarity with LVV and its candidates as they work to ensure that the next government of Kosovo is social democratic, and guided by the shared principles and objectives of our global movement.

SI condemns military coup in Myanmar

2 February 2021

The Socialist International strongly condemns the military coup in Myanmar on Monday 1 February, and calls for the immediate release of the political leaders detained by the military in flagrant violation of the rule of law. As an organisation for which developing and strengthening global democracy is a central objective, this regressive step represents a severe blow. This illegitimate seizure of power has been accompanied by measures to restrict telecommunications in Myanmar and fears of further curbs on individual freedoms and human rights.

There must be no return to the years of military dictatorship in Myanmar. Though a degree of democratic progress had been made in the country in recent years, including the holding of elections in 2015 and most recently in November 2020, the military has maintained its power and influence under the 2008 constitution, which reserves 25% of the seats in parliament and three ministries for serving military officers. This coup comes just months after the confirmation through the electoral process that the overwhelming majority of Burmese citizens want to see civilian leadership of their country.

At a time when the democratic future of Myanmar is under threat, it is important to keep in mind the plight of the Rohingya people there, who have suffered immensely in recent years. The forces that have overthrown the democratically elected government of Myanmar are complicit in the human rights atrocities and ethnic cleansing that have taken place in Rakhine province and regrettably were defended at the International Court of Justice in The Hague by Aung San Suu Kyi. There is a grave danger that an already desperate situation could worsen for the 600,000 Rohingya remaining in the province and the international community must be ready to act to prevent a further humanitarian catastrophe and secure the rights of both the Rohingya in Myanmar and the more than 700,000 refugees currently stranded in neighbouring Bangladesh.

The coup of 1 February was not the first in the history of Myanmar, but for the sake of the future well-being and prosperity of its citizens it must be the last. In addition to the immediate relinquishing of power by those responsible and the restoration of civilian rule, Myanmar needs further reforms to ensure the military does not wield political power but is under the authority of the democratically elected government. Those responsible for the coup and for violations of human rights in Myanmar must be held to account, while the political prisoners who have continued to be deprived of their liberty since 2015 should be released. Measures to remove the grip still held on the country by the military leadership, ensure accountability and guarantee the rights of the political opposition, are a prerequisite for the long overdue transition of Myanmar to full democracy, with equal rights for all its citizens, regardless of religion or ethnic group.

In defence of democracy in Haiti

4 February 2021

On Sunday, 7 February 2021, the mandate of the President of Haiti, Jovenel Moïse, comes to an end. The Socialist International expresses its rejection and deep concern over the decision of the president not to convene elections as per the constitution, making it impossible for his term to come to its legal end and deepening the grave deterioration of democracy in the country. With this, there are now seven elections of different authorities, of president, parliamentarians, territorial authorities and others, that have not been called or carried out.

The SI's work with Haiti is permanent and long-standing. At each of the meetings of its last presidiums, the organisation has heard interventions on the gravity of the local situation from its vice-president Victor Benoit, leader of the SI-member Social Democratic Assembly for the Progress of Haiti (RSD), and has also received reports on this from Edmonde Supplice Beauzile, leader of the Fusion of the Haitian Social Democrats, also an SI member party. Less than two months ago, at its meeting in December 2020, the SI Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean denounced the authoritarian drift of the Haitian president, who has been ruling by decree and has illegitimately concentrated different public powers in his hands. On that occasion, the Committee hailed the efforts of the Haitian democratic opposition in demanding the holding of free elections in accordance with the constitution. The same Committee, at its meeting in Jamaica in December 2019, condemned the attacks on human rights in Haiti, the excessive use of force in suppressing demonstrations, the assassinations and other crimes committed by agents of the state, by its militias and by criminal gangs that act with the connivance of the regime, demanding investigations and that the judiciary establish the facts and responsibilities.

Furthermore, in the same year 2019, the Secretary General of the Socialist International travelled to Port-au-Prince to meet with the two member parties of the organisation and with their agreement he met with the President of the Republic, proposing already then to initiate a national political dialogue that would include the government and the forces of the opposition to achieve a normalisation of the situation in the country.

Disregarding the alerts of Haitian political actors and the proposals for dialogue by the SI and other members of the international community, on 18 September last year, and outside of all constitutional provisions, Jovenel Moïse created by decree a Provisional Electoral Council, which de facto extended his mandate until 7 February, 2022. Our International rejects the presidential interpretation of the existence of an “institutional vacuum” and its illegitimate consequence of seeking to fill it irregularly through the creation of new bodies and authorities.

We see today in Haiti how crime and impunity, human rights violations, corruption of the public apparatus and the political persecution of social protest are realities that on a daily basis aggravate the economic, social and political crisis afflicting the country.

Faced with the great challenge to democracy and the constitutional order of the nation, the Socialist International reiterates the need for a national dialogue including all the political and social forces, to get Haiti out of the recurring spiral of crises. It is essential that free and transparent elections are convened as soon as possible, from which new authorities can emerge with full legitimacy. The Socialist International reaffirms its commitment to its member parties and to the Haitian democratic forces in pursuit of this objective.

Niger elects Bazoum as President

24 February 2021



The Socialist International warmly congratulates Mohamed Bazoum, the candidate of the SI member party PNDS, for his clear victory in the second round of the presidential elections held in Niger last Sunday 21 February. As announced yesterday evening by the Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI), Bazoum obtained 55.75% of the vote while his opponent Mahamane Ousmane got 44.25 %. The Constitutional Court should now confirm the outcome in the coming days.

For the first time in the history of the country, there will be a transition of power between democratically elected leaders, from President Mahamadou Issoufou to Mohamed Bazoum. The Socialist International is particularly proud of this historic achievement representing a major step in the process of strengthening democracy in Niger and in the region. This milestone in the democratic life of the country requires that all parties, candidates and citizens of Niger respect the final outcome of the election and refrain from any action that could jeopardise the democratic process.

One of the major challenges for the incoming president is the security of Niger, which has suffered greatly in recent years from the scourge of terrorism and armed conflicts in the wider Sahel region, with particular concern regarding the situation in the Tillaberi region in the south-west of the country. Instability and violence have sadly had a direct impact upon the

election itself, claiming the lives of at least eight election workers, seven of whom were killed when their vehicle hit a landmine in Tillaberi.

These great steps forward for democracy in Niger would not have been possible without the efforts and personal commitment of outgoing President Mahamadou Issoufou whose role in the re-democratisation of Niger will be his enduring legacy to his people, to his continent and to our global political family.

International Women's Day

8 March 2021



This International Women's Day on 8 March, our global social democratic movement, which is and has long been part of the historical struggle for women's rights and equality, pays homage to all the women engaged in the political battles of our time, a striking example of which we are currently witnessing in Myanmar.

Since the coup, which our International condemned from the outset, there have been unprecedented protests across Myanmar, calling for the restoration of democracy. At the forefront of these protests have been Myanmar's women, in defiance of those who seek to suppress and intimidate them, limit their freedoms and reduce their role in society. The deadly violence used in response to these demonstrations by security forces against peaceful protesters is utterly disgraceful and reflects the brutality of the military regime which has illegitimately seized power. We now know that at least 54 people have been killed during the anti-coup demonstrations, many of them victim to the abhorrent use of live ammunition against unarmed civilians.

The global social democratic movement mourns the deaths of these innocent people, noting with great sadness that these include women. Those responsible for these murders must be brought to justice and the international community must play its part in supporting the democratic aspirations of the people of Myanmar.

On this 110th anniversary of International Women's Day, the origins of which were promoted from within our movement, the Socialist International strongly and proudly reaffirms its commitment to the struggle of women for equal rights and opportunities everywhere in the world.



Women protestors in Yangon (*The New York Times*) Instagram



Kyal Sin, aged 19, was shot dead by the military while protesting in Yangon

Turkey's withdrawal from the Istanbul Convention

22 March 2021

The Socialist International is extremely concerned by the announced decision of Turkey to withdraw from the Istanbul Convention, through a decree issued by President Erdoğan. This unilateral act, apparently in violation of the Turkish constitution, is a significant setback for women's rights in Turkey and a deep symbolic blow to the ongoing struggle for women's rights across Europe and the world. The SI expresses its solidarity with all 42 million women in Turkey, whose human rights are threatened by this reckless and unacceptable action.

The Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence, commonly known as the Istanbul Convention, came into existence a decade ago with the aim of preventing violence, protecting victims and ending the impunity of those who perpetrate violence against women. Turkey was the first country to ratify the treaty, which bears the name of its largest city, following its unanimous adoption by the parliament. Violence against women is a violation of human rights, and the convention makes it the responsibility of states to prevent domestic violence, protect victims and prosecute accused offenders.

As Turkey signals its withdrawal from the convention, levels of violence against women are increasing. The last decade has tragically seen a rapid rise in femicide in Turkey to three times previous levels, which is an unacceptable development that needs urgently addressing. In this context, withdrawal from the Istanbul Convention is the precise opposite of what is required from their government by the women of Turkey and is tantamount to a direct attack on the rights of women by an increasingly authoritarian and conservative regime.

The Socialist International calls on President Erdoğan and the government of Turkey to reverse the ill-advised, illegitimate and damaging decision to withdraw from the Istanbul Convention. At a time when all governments must do more to bring an end to the scourge of gender-based violence, there is no justification for regressive steps such as those announced in Turkey. The SI offers its full support to the CHP, member party of the SI in Turkey, in its efforts to defend the rights of women and ensure that Turkey remain in the convention.

A call to uphold democracy in Turkey

23 March 2021

The chief public prosecutor of Turkey's Supreme Court of Appeals has issued an indictment for the closure of the People's Democratic Party, HDP, accusing its members of flouting the democratic and universal rules of law. The indictment also requests a political ban on 687 members of the HDP, representing a serious threat to the party.

The HDP has today 55 members of parliament. It is the second largest opposition party and the third largest political party in the country. In the last two years as many as 50 HDP mayors have been removed from office, and a worrying number of HDP members have been detained. In recent days HDP MP, Ömer Faruk Gergerlioğlu, who has also been sentenced to imprisonment due to a comment on social media, was stripped of his parliamentary seat by the Speaker of Turkey's parliament. Former co-chair of the HDP, Selahattin Demirtaş, was sentenced yesterday to three and a half years for comments he made to the press at an airport; and a further two HDP officials have today been accused of spreading terrorist propaganda and

being members of a terrorist organisation and will face a lengthy prison term if convicted. These latest developments highlight the difficult circumstances faced today by political forces in the opposition under the rule of president Erdogan.

Members of the HDP have expressed great concern over the future of their party and fear they may be prevented from running in the next parliamentary elections. The SI will continue to closely monitor these grave developments which undermine fundamental principles and pillars of democracy in the country.

Preserving the constitutional order in Bolivia

31 March 2021

Aware of the differences that have occurred within Bolivia and among its citizens since the 2019 electoral process, our International has followed with concern the levels of polarization of society in that country and calls on the different political actors to come together in mutual recognition and in the shared values and principles of democracy.

Coexistence within the framework of the rule of law and legal protection, which establishes and ensures freedoms and rights for all, guarantee that political life as well as the strengthening of its institutions generate the necessary trust for all within our nations.

Faced with the wishes of the whole of the Bolivian people and their desire to advance with these objectives, all the guarantees of due process to former authorities, today deprived of their liberty, become essential to ensure respect for the law, coexistence, the common value of peace and respect for the country's own constitution.

Myanmar - urgent action by the international community is needed

1 April 2021

The continued brutal crackdown by the Myanmar military against unarmed and peaceful protesters is a horrifying atrocity that must be brought to an end. The Socialist International is appalled by the systematic targeting of civilians by the security forces, who are murdering protestors on the streets and in their homes, and using assault, torture and mass detentions in inhumane conditions to try to suppress the uprising. The unrelenting bravery shown by all those protesting in Myanmar in spite of the severe danger to life is a source of both great concern and inspiration for democrats across the world, and the SI reiterates its full solidarity with those risking everything to stand up for civilian rule, democracy and human rights in Myanmar.

The death toll since the coup has tragically exceeded five hundred in recent days and continues to grow, including over a hundred people in one day on Saturday 26 March. Among the victims are a number of young children and teenagers whose lives have been cut dreadfully short and many more who have lost parents, friends, relatives and mentors and been exposed to harrowing and traumatic events that will leave deep emotional and psychological scars. The deliberate killing of men, women and children with live ammunition rounds aimed at the head and upper body is a travesty of human rights and a deeply criminal act. For too long the military in Myanmar has been able to act with impunity. It will continue to do so unless both the perpetrators of these criminal acts and those who have ordered the use of deadly force

against protesters are held to account, as well as those responsible for past crimes, including atrocities against the Rohingya and other minorities.

The international community has overwhelmingly reacted with shock, horror and anger at the massacres taking place in Myanmar, but widespread condemnation and sanctions have not been sufficient to bring an end to the bloodshed. The state of Myanmar, currently under the illegitimate control of the military junta, is not simply failing in its responsibility to protect its people from atrocities but is directly responsible for these outrages and as such it is incumbent upon the international community to act in line with the UN Charter to protect civilian populations, with the cooperation of regional partners such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Myanmar's neighbours must be ready to offer humanitarian assistance to those fleeing the terror in their country, by giving sanctuary to those seeking asylum from indiscriminate violence against civilians.

Though the most pressing concern is an immediate halt to the violence and loss of life in Myanmar, as the SI has previously urged, it is also imperative for the future of the country that the results of the democratic election in November 2020 are upheld and the government chosen by the people is reinstated. The tragic events of the last two months are a further reminder of the urgent need for reform in Myanmar to restrict the power of the military, who have once more shown their willingness to use force to rapidly reverse and overturn the steady progress made towards democracy in recent years. It remains evident that a deeper transformation is needed to remove the grip still held on the country by the military leadership, ensure accountability and guarantee the rights of the political opposition, steps which are a prerequisite for Myanmar to realise its long-awaited transition to full democracy, with equal rights for all its citizens, regardless of religion or ethnic group.

Social democracy delivering in Niger

2 April 2021

The Socialist International conveys its warmest greetings and congratulations to outgoing President Mahamadou Issoufou and to incoming President Mohamed Bazoum.

We are, across all the continents, extremely proud to stand with our comrades of Niger at this important moment in the history of the country.

It is a true pleasure to congratulate Niger's president-elect, Mohamed Bazoum, on this historic occasion. We are witnessing the first democratic transition of power in this country's history, as our dear friend and comrade President Mahamadou Issoufou comes to the end of his second term.

Niger has been a functioning multi-party democracy for a decade, since President Issoufou was first elected in 2011, and this transition today demonstrates an example and a much observed moment for Niger's democratic future. The failed attempted assault on the Presidential palace yesterday is firmly condemned by the international community and we reaffirm that any attack against democracy in Niger is an attack against democracy everywhere.

President Issoufou's achievements during his two terms in office are fundamental to this democratic process, and the Socialist International warmly celebrates his many accomplishments. Niger has advanced in many areas, including economic growth, human and social development, and opening new economic opportunities for the future of this country.

In thanking President Issoufou for his commitment and service, it is a great pleasure for our political family to welcome Niger's new incoming President, Mohamed Bazoum, who has long

served his country in different capacities. He is a long-standing comrade, who also has been involved in the work of the Socialist International and is well known in the international community.

In the election of Bazoum, the people of Niger have chosen to continue the democratic path, and we sincerely congratulate them.

Our International is particularly proud of this victory, which is not only one for democracy, but for our member party, our comrades, and for the shared values and principles of our global movement, values that both President Issoufou and President-elect Bazoum have both served well in their many responsibilities. These values and principles, which are today shining in Niger, unite our entire political family across the world.

We wish President Bazoum every success in continuing to strengthen democracy and in advancing growth and progress with equal opportunities for all, confident of the solidarity and support of our organization and all its members in all his endeavours.

In Guatemala the case against Sandra Torres is political persecution

23 April 2021

- The case of Sandra Torres is a political case and not a legal one. The political persecution against her has unfortunately been based on misinformation by some public prosecutors, who until now have not shown their impartiality and independence in accordance with international standards.

- The rule of law and Guatemalan democracy are once again going through a critical moment. It is necessary to strengthen its institutions and the protection of human rights, as well as democratic elections, with transparency and accountability.

- All citizens, voters and candidates must have the necessary guarantees to participate in electoral processes, in accordance with international standards.

- No one can be prosecuted for conducts that were not crimes at the time; and furthermore, criminal proceedings must scrupulously respect the judicial guarantees enshrined in the Constitution and the laws of Guatemala, as well as in international instruments on human rights.

- Due to the aforementioned, one of the oldest guarantees of due process is the *presumption of innocence*. A person cannot be convicted neither by the prosecutors, nor by the press, nor by their political enemies. In a democratic state, a person can only be subjected to proceedings when there are objective elements that seriously presume their responsibility; but they cannot be convicted unless an independent and impartial judge declares them legally guilty, beyond all reasonable doubt.

- **The process undertaken against Sandra Torres has revealed the political persecution against her**, to thereby try to exclude her and disqualify her as an electoral candidate. This is evidenced by the facts themselves: the day after (February 6, 2019) the Supreme Electoral



Tribunal of Guatemala handed Sandra Torres the credentials as presidential candidate of the National Unity of Hope (UNE) party, the Public Ministry, through the Special Prosecutor's Office against Impunity, filed against Sandra Torres (and 4 MPs of UNE) the request for their criminal preliminary trial.

- Despite the fact that the Supreme Electoral Tribunal, as the highest authority on electoral matters, verified and audited the UNE party with a favorable opinion on financial matters without any qualms, just three (3) days before the second presidential round, the Public Ministry requested the cancellation of the UNE party, supposedly for the crime of illegal electoral financing; and on those same dates, the other presidential candidate (supported by businessman tycoon Dionisio Gutiérrez) presented to the Public Ministry a request for an arrest warrant promising that if he won he would put Sandra Torres in jail.

- Subsequently, once Sandra Torres had lost in the second round of the presidential elections and therefore was without immunity (September 2, 2019), the Public Ministry requested an arrest warrant against Sandra Torres for the alleged crimes of Unreported Financing and Illegal Association.

- **The crimes for which Sandra Torres is accused show the arbitrariness of the case fabricated against her, in violation of the universal principles of human rights:**

1. Retroactive application of criminal law, that is, the intention to apply crimes that at the time of the conduct were not crimes, in violation of the Constitution and human rights treaties¹.
2. Violation of the principle of criminal legality, due to the non-existence of the crime of "illicit association" ².
3. Violation of the principle of personal criminal responsibility and not for acts of another natural or legal person³.

- **In conclusion**, by virtue of the facts of this case, it is evident that **there is no fact or proof to support the criminal complaint against Sandra Torres** for either of the two crimes. Therefore, it is evident that this case against Sandra Torres is a gross maneuver of **political persecution**.

- The case against Sandra Torres should be closed as soon as possible because it lacks foundation and is a case of clear political persecution, which compromises the international responsibility not only of the Guatemalan State, but also of the prosecutors and judges who participate improperly.

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1. The fiscal complaint refers to article 407 "0" of the Penal Code on the crime of "unregistered electoral financing" which was approved in November 2018 and the facts of the complaint refer to the 2015 campaign.
 2. The crime of "Illegal Association" does not apply because the political party UNE is a legitimate institution; and in the crimes of law there is no Illegal or Unreported Electoral Financing.
 3. The accusation is so absurd that it is based on the fact that in 2015 the UNE received from the Maariv company a contribution of Q5,664,000 in its accounts that were not reported to the party. Sandra Torres was the General Secretary of the party at that time. However, the contribution of said company (actually Q2,562,226.00) was duly registered and noted in the party's accounting, as well as in the reports of the Electoral Tribunal, with receipts issued and notarized. In any case it was a contribution to the party and not to Sandra Torres. And the cheque that the Public Ministry relates with Sandra Torres, that Mr. Michael Erichsen contributed in the second round, never entered the party or Sandra Torres' account. Furthermore, Sandra Torres was not the Secretary General at that time.

Solidarity with the people of India

26 April 2021



The Socialist International expresses its deep sadness and regret at the catastrophic suffering and loss of life in India in recent days due to the rampant spread of the coronavirus across the country. We have witnessed with shock the scenes of distress and anguish, and our thoughts and solidarity are with the people of India at this incredibly challenging and distressing time.

The healthcare system in India has been stretched to breaking point and beyond, and without immediate action the situation could significantly worsen. In the face of this growing crisis, we call on the international community to urgently offer all possible assistance to India in the form of medical supplies, vaccines and supplies for vaccine factories, and tools to help identify and control emerging variants of the disease.

The Socialist International endorses the call of Rahul Gandhi, former president of its member party, the Indian National Congress, for free vaccines for all Indians. Access to the vaccine should in no circumstances be determined by ability to pay. As our organisation has consistently stated, equitable access to vaccines and their distribution to all countries of the world in sufficient quantities is the only way to truly protect the global population from the coronavirus. No one is safe from the pandemic until we all are safe and the tragic recent developments in India are a stark reminder that the struggle against the pandemic is a global one.

Defending democracy and the constitution in Mongolia

28 April 2021

The Socialist International rejects the unconstitutional attempts by President Battulga Khaltmaa in Mongolia to disband the ruling Mongolian People's Party (MPP) by a presidential decree. In taking this anti-democratic and anti-constitutional step, he has irresponsibly provoked a potential crisis at a time when the country needs to unite and confront the health, economic and social challenges resulting from the coronavirus pandemic.

The SI-member MPP, which recently celebrated its 100th anniversary, has overseen the transition of Mongolia into a multi-party democracy and was overwhelmingly backed by the Mongolian people as it won a parliamentary majority in elections last year. The accusations made by the president against the MPP of manipulating the constitutional court and militarising the state are not justified or backed up by evidence. Presidential elections are due in June this year, and in line with the constitutional amendment that he himself signed, the current president cannot stand for reelection. President Battulga Khaltmaa, in seeking to ban the MPP and thereby preventing Mongolia's largest party from presenting a candidate for the presidency, is undermining democracy and the right of the Mongolian people to freely elect their head of state.

The SI will continue to be vigilant around the situation in Mongolia and offers its support to the MPP in the face of this illegal decree. We are confident that the MPP will continue to govern in the interests of all the Mongolian people and look forward to a free and fair presidential election in which the MPP will be allowed to participate, and a peaceful transition of power to the duly elected president.

Online meeting of the SI Kurdish Working Group

1 May 2021



Representatives of SI Kurdish member parties took part in an SI virtual working meeting on 1 May, in which exchanges were held on their respective circumstances and current political challenges, including respect for their human and political rights. Participants also put forward views and ideas in relation to future work within the SI.

The challenges outlined included many common elements, while remaining specific to the particular circumstances faced in each country. In the current global context, all had been impacted by the scourge of the coronavirus pandemic, and the crucial and much-debated issue of global access to vaccines as a way out of the crisis was touched upon. Participants were also united in their desire for future in-person meetings on the issues that were being discussed, as soon as it was safe and feasible.

In Iraq, the key political objective was decentralisation and a transfer of power to elected authorities, which was considered to be advancing at a very slow pace. There had been some positive developments as far as the security situation was concerned, following the fall of ISIS, however its ideology still continued to pose a threat. In Syria, where the Kurds had similarly had a major role in the battle against terrorism and extremism in the region, it was reported that their struggle to establish democratic rights and freedoms continued, and there was a feeling that more international solidarity was required to support them in this effort.

The struggle for the human rights of the Kurdish people in Iran was underlined, along with the destructive approach of the Iranian regime against the peaceful aspirations of the Kurds. Iran continued to employ violent internal policies against its own people. A particular concern for many was the absence of human rights in the recently restarted discussions on the nuclear issue, while the situation for women and minorities in the country was as bad as it had ever been. In Turkey, where the Erdogan regime was trying to suffocate democratic struggles, the persecution of the Kurds was continuing, with the government using anti-democratic measures and mass detentions to suppress all opposition, as could be seen with the current Kobani trial, while pursuing a militaristic approach both domestically and abroad.

With regard to the political aspirations of the Kurdish people, all those present expressed a great willingness to work with other parties and to cooperate with other groups having similar values and principles. Participants highlighted that the Kurdish issue was relevant to all

countries in the region, and a positive outcome for the Kurdish people could have hugely beneficial effects on the whole of the Middle East. It was considered necessary to ensure that Kurds are a part of any roadmap to future democratisation and reforms in the region. In this context, other progressive forces from the region could be included in future discussions on the Kurdish question. It was noted that the SI had a long track record of advocacy on the Kurdish question, and through its global meetings had led to a greater understanding of the issue by political parties worldwide.

Turning their attention to the future work on the Kurdish question, participants were in agreement that this would need to be done taking into account the significant and complex issues discussed that are present in all regions inhabited by the Kurdish people. Suggestions put forward for future actions included the opening and development of a dialogue between Kurdish and non-Kurdish political parties in the region, building understanding and bridging the cultural gaps.

There was a will among those present to pursue these discussions and hold further exchanges of views with interested member parties of the Socialist International, building on the work within the SI in favour of the political and human rights of all Kurdish people, in line with the basic principles and objectives of the global social democratic family.

The meeting was attended by the SI Secretary General, by Soran Jamal Taher and Sarkawt Muhammed Ghafour from the PUK, Iraq; Khalid Azizi and Mouloud Swara from the KDP of Iran; Loghman Ahmedi from the PDKI, Iran; Kako Alyar and Diniya Rahemzada from the KPIK of Iran; Salih Muslem and Ibrahem Muslem from the PYD of Syria; and Hişyar Özsoy, Evren Çevik and Lokman Sazan from the HDP, Turkey.

El Salvador: democracy requires control of the exercise of power

3 May 2021

The Socialist International, the worldwide organisation of social democratic, labour and socialist parties, has learned with grave concern of the decision of the Legislative Assembly of El Salvador to dismiss the five members of the Constitutional Chamber of the Supreme Court of Justice, in its first session the day before yesterday, as well as the Attorney General of the nation.

Ignoring and bypassing the division of the powers of the State, in a vote approved by a majority of 64 votes out of a total of 84 members, the Legislative Assembly, currently controlled by the New Ideas party of the President of El Salvador, Nayib Bukele, voted for this dismissal, which was defended by the President of the country. For their part, the members of the Constitutional Chamber of the Supreme Court of Justice of El Salvador declared the Assembly's decision unconstitutional by violating the republican, democratic and representative form of government.

Likewise, the Constitutional Chamber pointed out that "with a marked intention of suppressing effective controls towards the Executive and Legislative organ" the decision adopted by the members of the Assembly "has a negative impact on the control of the exercise of power" carried out by said Chamber.

The Socialist International fully shares what was expressed by the dismissed members of the Constitutional Chamber, that "only by controlling power, there is assurance that democracy and rights do not depend on the discretion of a person or a group."

Our International, which prioritises democracy as the highest value in the conduct of our governments and respect for their institutions, will closely follow the development of the management of the current government of El Salvador, at a time when this can only be achieved with the full protection of the freedoms and rights of all.

Solidarity with Colombia

6 May 2021

The Socialist International has been following with deep consternation the brutal violence that has been carried out in Colombia against protesters, women and men, throughout different cities of the country, who have denounced and firmly rejected the project presented by President Iván Duque for tax reform and tax increases, intended to cover the impact that Covid-19 has had on the country's economy.

The measures were immediately questioned by important sectors of Colombian society and thousands of citizens took to the streets en masse to denounce the fact that the popular sectors and the middle class would be the ones most affected. The popular outpouring comes to a certain extent as a continuity of the social mobilisations seen at the end of 2019 against the economic and social policies of the government. The demands for greater equality and better living conditions by the most disadvantaged sectors have continued and after more than a year of pandemic the crisis has only worsened. The outbreak that we have been witnessing now in Colombia is one of social protest.

The government has since withdrawn the measure and President Duque has called for dialogue. The mobilisations, however, have not ceased, rather they have grown throughout the country and count with the support of Colombians living abroad and other actors beyond their borders.

In this context, the Socialist International, which will always support a dialogue between the different political and social actors in the country, condemns the measures that forcibly prevent or restrict social protest rather than seek to restore public order. The current context of health emergency cannot serve as a justification for arbitrary, illegitimate or excessive restrictions on freedom of expression and assembly, which are rights that should never be violated.

The SI vigorously rejects and condemns the violence and the excessive use of force by police groups. During these days of protest, twenty-four people have already lost their lives and the number of injured is close to a thousand. The serious accusations of brutal actions by those in uniform and of the violation of the human rights of Colombians who were the victims must be promptly clarified and responsibility established, and the corresponding sanctions must be applied.

The SI considers that statements such as those of former President Uribe, founder of the Democratic Center party, currently in government, do not promote a peaceful solution to the current crisis and do not appear to accept the fact that the country carried out with effort and perseverance a Peace Process concluded in recent years. In post-conflict Colombia, mobilisations must take place within a democratic framework that is recognised as an expression of legitimate social demands, the actions of the police force must be oriented towards maintaining public order and not towards the criminalisation of protest, and the lives and rights of all Colombian women and men must be respected and protected by their leaders in government.

In these difficult times the country is going through, the Socialist International expresses its full solidarity with the people of Colombia and with its member party, the Colombian Liberal Party.

SI calls for end to deadly violence between Israel and Palestine

12 May 2021

The Socialist International is deeply dismayed by the outbreak of deadly violence in Israel and Palestine, which has led to the loss of innocent life on both sides of the border. The SI mourns the civilian casualties and calls for an immediate end to the rocket attacks and airstrikes that indiscriminately kill, injure and destroy. Further violence will only serve to harm innocent citizens of both Palestine and Israel and only benefits those who have no interest in peace.

This severe escalation in the conflict has been provoked by the evictions by Israel of Palestinian families from East Jerusalem and the demolition of their homes, which are intensely damaging to the prospects for peace. Demonstrations against this have been met by unacceptable violence and aggression from Israeli security forces, which has in turn led to rocket attacks against Israel and airstrikes on Gaza. The evictions of Palestinian families and the demolition of their homes must stop, in East Jerusalem and across the Palestinian Territories. These provocative and calculated acts in recent days and weeks against Palestinian residents of East Jerusalem are a continuation of a policy of hostility from the Israeli government, and the systematic and intentional denial of the basic rights of the Palestinian people. This includes violent police action against Palestinians exercising their right to worship at the Al-Aqsa mosque during the holy month of Ramadan.

Illegal and oppressive acts will not change or reduce the demands for an end to 54 years of occupation, discrimination and the system of segregation, and the right to full equality and self-determination for Palestinians, which are a prerequisite for peace. In the pursuit of these aims, the SI reiterates its solidarity with the Palestinian non-violent opposition. The SI continues to fully support a two-state solution to the Israel-Palestine conflict, and the legitimate aims of the Palestinian people for an independent state based on the 1967 borders with its capital in East Jerusalem.

The SI remains committed to working with its member parties in Palestine and Israel, whose voices are among the most prominent for peace and a two-state solution, and needed now more than ever. The support and engagement of the international community in favour of Middle East peace and the recognition of Palestinian statehood remain vital. The legitimate demands of the Palestinian people will not be diminished by unilateral moves taken by Israel in violation of international law, and the SI will continue to act in support of the rights of both peoples to live in peace.



Mikalai Statkevich

Lukashenko's tyranny intensifies persecution of social democrats and pro-democracy leaders

24 May 2021

Despite almost a year of unprecedented pro-democracy demonstrations in Belarus, the situation in the country is worsening and requires the urgent attention of the international community. The dictatorial regime continues to violently persecute

demonstrators and members of the opposition, in the face of massive and sustained protests against the fraudulent victory claimed by Alexander Lukashenko after the presidential election in August 2020. Belarusians have been targeted for demonstrating and for their communications on social media, but also for such innocent actions as displaying or simply wearing colours associated with the protest movements. Meanwhile, those responsible for violence and brutality are able to escape justice, as police officers who have killed protesters have not faced any repercussions or reprimand for their actions, showing the extent to which the rule of law has been undermined in Belarus.

The Socialist International is particularly concerned by the situation faced by members of the leadership of its member party in Belarus, Narodnaya Hramada. These include Mikalai Statkevich, the party president, and Syarhei Sparysh, the general secretary. Additionally, three-quarters of the party's presidium have been forced into exile as a result of persecution by the regime. Members of Narodnaya Hramada and other opposition politicians have been arrested and incarcerated for their political beliefs and convictions, facing false charges, inhumane conditions and daily violations of their human rights.



Syarhei Sparysh

Mikalai Statkevich has been persecuted over many years as a result of his opposition to the Lukashenko regime. As a presidential candidate in 2010, he was arrested and imprisoned for five years, and in May 2020, prior to the last presidential elections, he was again arrested and imprisoned under harsh conditions, where he remains to this day. He is falsely accused of organising mass disorder, stopping the activities of the electoral commission and inciting hate, with the total absence of any presumption of innocence. He has been denied contact with his family throughout his latest period of imprisonment, causing additional pain and suffering, and it is likely that when he is tried the proceedings will be concealed by the authorities and take place in closed court. On 6 May 2021, Syarhei Sparysh was sentenced to six years in a penal colony on charges relating to using Telegram as a messaging channel, which he had nothing to do with. He has also been falsely accused of preparing for riots and obstructing the work of the electoral commission.

The Socialist International reiterates its call for the immediate release of Mikalai Statkevich, Syarhei Sparysh and all other political prisoners and prisoners of conscience in Belarus and urges the international community and its member parties to increase pressure on the Belarusian authorities. The only acceptable outcome in Belarus is for the will of the people to be heard and for free and fair elections to be held, with independent vote monitoring. Those responsible for state sponsored violence and violations of human rights must be brought to justice. We express our continued solidarity with Narodnaya Hramada, its members, the Belarusian opposition and all those citizens of Belarus who continue to bravely stand against the dictatorial and authoritarian regime.

SI condemns second coup in Mali in nine months

26 May 2021

The Socialist International vigorously condemns the second military coup headed by Colonel Assimi Goita in Mali, this time removing and detaining President Bah Ndaw and Prime Minister

Moctar Ouane, who were both appointed last September to lead the transitional government that followed the military ousting of the democratically elected President, Ibrahim Boubacar Keita.

Nine months on from the previous coup, Mali once again finds itself suffering the consequences of a military takeover, destroying the hopes and wishes of the Malian people and blocking the return to democracy and the timetable agreed for democratic elections that Malians and the international community had accepted.

Following the rupture of democracy, despite the commitments previously agreed by the initiators of the transitional government, the people of Mali and their political leaders are still not allowed to become the real protagonists in defining the framework to guarantee full rights and freedoms for all Malians.

The Socialist International demands the immediate release of the detained President and Prime Minister, and calls for the swift resumption of the agreed framework and timetable for the restoration of democracy in Mali. Member parties of the Socialist International from throughout the continent have been, and are, in the forefront of the efforts to secure democratic governance in countries of the region and the SI stands firmly today with its two member parties in Mali, the RPM and ADEMA, and all democrats in that country.

We are encouraged by the response of the international community, including global and regional organisations such as the United Nations, the African Union, ECOWAS, MINUSMA, among others, and look forward to agreement on a common position by the UN Security Council.

Priorities on democracy, Covid-19 and peace discussed by SI members in Africa

5 June 2021





The SI Africa Committee held a virtual session on Saturday 5 June 2021 with the participation of member parties from across the continent. Delegates addressed some of the most important issues of the day from a national, sub-regional and African perspective, focusing on continental priorities in relation to defending and strengthening democracy in the region, the impact of Covid-19 and its social and economic challenges, and overcoming conflicts and ensuring peace.

The meeting was opened by SI Secretary General Luis Ayala, who emphasised the common nature of the challenges that would be discussed during the course of the meeting and the opportunity that it presented to engage in a meaningful conversation in order to advance common positions and be a strong voice for democracy, resolving conflicts and to ensure access to vaccines for all countries of Africa. Our International has today a clear profile on the continent through the work of its members, and a record as a force for progress and development, with respect for freedoms and rights.

The chair of the committee, Bokary Treta (RPM, Mali), referred in his opening remarks to the importance of the committee as a valuable platform for exchanges. He considered that discussions from an African perspective on issues of common concern for all members was of great benefit, and underlined the need to promote multilateralism in the face of the challenges of inter-community armed conflicts, terrorism and drug trafficking. Referring to the recent coup d'état in Mali, he stressed the fundamental need to restore a solid democracy and respect for the will of the people.

At the heart of many of the contributions made was the subject of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic and its devastating impact on health, social cohesion and economic well-being. In the face of the immediate health crisis, there were unanimous calls for more equality of access to vaccines, at a time when delivery and distribution of these life-saving doses is exposing vast inequalities on an international scale, with less than 2% of the population of Africa having received a vaccination at the time of the meeting. There was enthusiastic support for the Socialist International's stand for fair and equal access to vaccines and prevent Africa becoming marginalised. Any and all necessary measures to facilitate the rapid manufacture of vaccines for use in Africa, including waivers of intellectual property related to these vaccines would be strongly supported.

In addition to the cost in terms of human health and life, the pandemic continues to disproportionately affect the most vulnerable countries and populations in economic terms, in

particular women and the poor. The potential for the economic damage of the coronavirus crisis to cause long term harm to developing economies must be addressed on a global scale, and with this in mind there were calls from a number of participants for debt relief and annulment in order to enable developing economies to allocate funds to addressing the devastation caused by the pandemic and create the conditions for the achievement of the SDGs. With Africa potentially heading for its most serious recession as a result of the pandemic, measures were also proposed to boost cooperation and bolster trade across the region with a focus on investment and sovereignty.

With regard to the conflicts and insecurity that continue to scourge multiple African countries, a number of interventions were made by those directly affected. Terrorist groups continue to destabilise many regions of the continent, with a significant presence in the Sahel. The threat was gravely underlined by reports of a terrorist massacre on the morning of the meeting on a village in northern Burkina Faso that claimed over 100 lives. This despicable act was condemned by members of the committee, who called for the international community to redouble efforts to bring stability to the Sahel.

The committee was updated on the continued crisis in Cameroon, where the SI and its member party have spoken out over several years on the need for an end to violence and respect for the rule of law. The multiple conflicts in Africa were responsible for a sense of insecurity extending beyond those countries suffering most directly, leading participants in the meeting to underline the importance of developing dialogue, democratic consent and regional collaboration to achieve the goals of our movement for peace and security, as mentioned, among others, by Senegal. The recent end to the ceasefire in Western Sahara was also a cause for concern among the attendees at the meeting, who listened to the views of representatives of the parties in Morocco and Western Sahara. The situation continues to require the full engagement and mobilisation of the United Nations and the international community to ensure that a peaceful solution is reached.

Another challenge that is central to the identity of SI member parties in Africa is the struggle to defend and strengthen democracy. In many countries, a democratic system is the result of a hard-fought struggle by member parties of the SI against colonialism, dictatorships and authoritarianism, but recent events have demonstrated that democratic gains cannot be taken for granted. Military influence over the political process remains a serious threat in many countries, a fact underlined by recent developments in Mali and Chad and the committee reiterated the importance of taking a firm stance against any attempt to seize power through military force.

Speakers equally warned of the need to remain vigilant to efforts to manipulate or undermine democracy in favour of ruling parties, and the danger that governments that come to power through free elections can then seek to deny the same opportunity to their political rivals in the future, with particular concern over recent anti-democratic developments in Ghana and Mauritius. Interventions from a South African and Namibian perspective equally underlined the importance for ruling parties to continue to grow and strengthen democracy and foster African democratic institutions to safeguard advances on a continental level. The Democratic Republic of Congo was one such country where regional support was needed for the defence and reinforcement of democracy, a viewpoint shared in Angola where a concerted strategy involving governments, the African Union and sub-regional organisations was a priority.

The difficult conditions faced by opposition parties in countries across the continent were underlined by accounts of democratic crises in Djibouti, where there had been a massive boycott of the presidential elections by the electorate, and Togo, where a political crisis was ongoing and the regime had used the pandemic as a means to achieve its ends. In Algeria, the

conditions were not present to conduct snap elections scheduled for June in a safe manner, leading to a boycott by opposition parties and a loss of inclusiveness and legitimacy in the political process. Though Tunisia had seen positive change through a new constitution, democrats there needed to be vigilant and persistent in order to build democratic institutions and prevent a return to the previous system.

The perseverance of Socialist International member parties in Africa and their willingness to work towards the common aims of the organisation were in evidence throughout the meeting. Diverse views were heard and appreciated, and there was a shared resolve to advance the well-being of the people of Africa by making progress on peace and democracy, and actively working for a global response to the pandemic that takes into account the needs of Africa for fair access to vaccines and a path to economic recovery.

Grave concern at the deterioration of the political situation in Nicaragua

15 June 2021

The Socialist International has been following with deep concern the continuing deterioration of the political situation in Nicaragua, where general elections are to be held on 7 November this year. Already in January 2019 the world Council of the SI, at its meeting in the city of Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, decided by a large majority to withdraw the ruling party, the Sandinista National Liberation Front, FSLN, from its membership as a result of “gross violations of human rights and democratic values committed by the government of Nicaragua”.

In the run-up to the elections in November, a number of prominent opponents and critics of President Daniel Ortega have been arrested in recent weeks and days, including Cristiana Chamorro, daughter of the former president, who leads the Foundation named after her mother Violeta Barrios de Chamorro; Félix Madariaga; Juan Sebastián Chamorro; the former ambassador Arturo Cruz; the economist José Adán Aguerri; the sociologist Violeta Granera; the lawyer José Pallais; the president of Unamos, Suyen Barahona, and the vice president of Unamos, Hugo Torres; Dora Téllez, a former combatant along with President Ortega and today an opponent; the lawyer and activist of Unamos Ana Margarita Vijil; the lawyer Tamara Dávila, an activist of Unamos, and the former deputy foreign minister of Nicaragua, Víctor Hugo Tinoco Fonseca. Likewise, a number of other social actors and activists on human rights in opposition to the Ortega government have been detained in recent days, some of whom are incommunicado and their whereabouts unknown.

Not only for Nicaragua but for the entire region of Latin America and Caribbean and beyond, it is grave to observe that in recent years the institutional framework and democratic legitimacy in that country have been progressively deteriorating and degrading, in full view of all. Today the situation has become critical, as the fundamental rights and freedoms of Nicaraguan citizens are being violated.

The massive social demonstrations of 2018 and the serious human rights violations that accompanied their violent repression by the government, are in part a reaction to the increasing concentration of public functions by the Sandinistas and to their project to keep President Daniel Ortega in power. Following those events, various legislative, administrative, and judicial initiatives were adopted leading to a restriction of democracy in Nicaragua, measures which today are being applied for illegitimate political ends.

Given the need for conditions that will allow credible, participatory and inclusive elections next November, the government of Nicaragua must immediately release all those who have been detained for political reasons, and prevent all illegitimate restrictions against the rights of its

citizens to express their support for the different proposals and alternatives that seek the backing and confidence of the Nicaraguan electorate.

Impending trial of Mikalai Statkevich in Belarus

19 June 2021



Mikalai Statkevich, leader of the SI's member party in Belarus, Narodnaya Hramada, has been held as a political prisoner by the Lukashenko regime for more than a year. His trial is scheduled to take place at 10am on 24 June 2021, at Homiel pre-trial detention centre, 305 kms from the capital Minsk, where he is being held. The trial, like other sham trials in Belarus, will be carried out behind closed doors. Mikalai Statkevich previously served a five year sentence in 2010, when he ran as a presidential candidate against Lukashenko.

The Socialist International is deeply concerned for his fate. During his time in detention, Statkevich has been denied all contact with his family and has had limited access to his lawyer.

Mikalai Statkevich is an active member of the Socialist International and is co-chair of the SI Committee for the CIS, the Caucasus and the Black Sea. He has worked tirelessly, at the risk of his freedom, to bring change and democracy to Belarus and to free the Belarusian people from Lukashenko's dictatorship.

The Socialist International reiterates its demand for his immediate release, and for the release of all political prisoners in Belarus. Today there are over 500 political prisoners behind bars in Belarus. They all face torture and abuse. In recent weeks a prisoner has died of undetermined reasons and another has attempted suicide during his own trial. Political prisoners are labelled with yellow tags.

The Socialist International, the global organisation of social democratic, labour and democratic socialist parties, calls on all its members worldwide and on the international community at large, to once again vigorously protest against this political persecution by the Lukashenko regime and to demand the freedom of Mikalai Statkevich and all those who are unjustly incarcerated in Belarus.

SI condemns assassination of President Moïse in Haiti

7 July 2021

The Socialist International expresses its condemnation and abhorrence of the brutal assassination of HE Jovenel Moïse, President of Haiti, by unidentified gunmen who stormed his home in the early hours of this morning. Our thoughts and condolences are with his family at this time, in particular with his wife, Martine Moïse, who is recovering in hospital having also been shot during the attack.

Such a heinous act further weakens democracy in Haiti, a country which has long struggled with socio-economic and political challenges, and targets a vulnerable nation at a complex time in its political life.

The Socialist International has for years been present in the country, where it counts with two member parties, supporting the consolidation of democracy and the securing of peace, and was involved in efforts to promote dialogue between the President and the opposition in discussions held by the SI Secretary General in Port-au-Prince with the Haitian SI member parties on the one hand and President Moïse on the other.

At this painful time for Haiti, the SI once again reiterates its hope for an inclusive dialogue with all the political and social forces, in order to achieve political stability in the country, to maintain peace and security for its citizens, and to keep the nation on a democratic path.

SI condemns detention of Freddy Guevara in Caracas

13 July 2021

The Socialist International expresses its strongest condemnation of the arrest of the former vice president of the Venezuelan National Assembly, Deputy Freddy Guevara, a well-known political figure of Voluntad Popular (VP), a member party of this organization in Venezuela, carried out on Monday, July 12, by agents of the intelligence services of the Bolivarian regime (SEBIN).

While Guevara was traveling along a Caracas highway, the car in which he was traveling was intercepted by hooded State agents, who proceeded to kidnap him without showing any judicial document, description of charges or any accusation. This violent and illegitimate loss of his freedom was recorded and transmitted by Guevara himself via his mobile phone and the images and audios were immediately uploaded to social networks through which they have circulated profusely, provoking immediate reactions of astonishment and repudiation both in the country and abroad. It is also worth mentioning and condemning that the same day a situation of similar nature and gravity affected the president in charge, Juan Guaidó. These actions show the absolute disregard for human rights and for the basic guarantees of physical integrity and personal freedom that are characteristic of the Nicolás Maduro regime.

The SI considers unacceptable the statement of the Attorney General of the Republic, Tarek William Saab, dated the same day of the events, which, ignoring the essential procedural rights of any accused, links Guevara with extremist and paramilitary groups associated with the Colombian government. The Prosecutor anticipates that he will file charges for very serious crimes, such as terrorism, attacks against the constitutional order, conspiracy to commit a crime and treason. It is not the first time that Guevara has faced illegitimate accusations and political persecution, already in 2017 he had to take refuge in the Chilean embassy in Venezuela, where he remained until he was pardoned along with a hundred opposition activists in 2020.

The Bolivarian government, judicial and criminal prosecution and police bodies must immediately cease any act that violates the human rights of the inhabitants of Venezuela. The SI holds the Nicolás Maduro regime responsible for the physical integrity and security of Freddy Guevara and demands that he and all prisoners of conscience be released. Any trial that any Venezuelan faces must fully respect the presumption of innocence and the procedural guarantees. The criminalisation of political action, harassment and deprivation of liberty for merely opposing a regime that has distanced itself from all democratic norms, are unacceptable. In addition to their condemnation, these acts should mobilise the international

community to stand in solidarity with the Venezuelan people and to act in support of respect for the fundamental rights of all Venezuelans.

The situation in Cuba

28 July 2021

Original: Spanish

The Socialist International has been following with deep concern the latest events that have taken place in Cuba, which continue to generate reactions throughout the international community and serious concern among democratic political forces in various regions, including members of this organisation.

The images of repression of various demonstrations in recent days in a number of Cuban cities reached different parts of the world, of women and men protesting lack of food, medicine, and access to basic services, while raising their voices with strength and determination, calling for freedom. These two demands encapsulated key challenges facing this nation today.

In 1958, the struggle of the Cuban people against the corrupt dictatorship of that time opened a path of liberation for an oppressed and overlooked people, which was received at the time with great attention and feelings of solidarity across the globe.

Years later, longstanding dictatorships in Southern Europe fell due to the determination and courage of the citizens, just as the struggles against colonialism and for independence led to new times in Africa. In Latin America and the Caribbean, dictatorial military regimes which had multiplied, were obliged to give way to the pressure and demands of their inhabitants and leave office, in times when also in Asia and Eastern Europe, not only walls, but authoritarian regimes fell to the demands for freedom by their citizens.

All these democratic revolutions opened up a new path for millions and millions of citizens on all continents, empowered by the triumph of their ideals and ready to build a different future. New and old parties, movements, fronts and government programmes, today define and identify political actors in the 21st century, in recognition and respect for the common rules of democracy with very few exceptions.

From the defence and protection of human rights in all circumstances, to the fundamental commitment of the State to the due recognition of those who have a different opinion, as well as the equality of all citizens before the law and the strict division of the powers of the State, these are today basic pillars of the system of rights and freedoms upon which democracy has developed throughout the world.

Cuba, sixty-two years on, must arrive to living in a society where all Cuban women and men are able to freely adhere, defend, oppose or criticise the decisions of their government or of the opposition without restriction. In a democracy there is and must always be space for everyone, and everyone must freely contribute their opinion without any type of retaliation, so that it bears its fruits.

In face of the difficult economic situation and the consequences of the pandemic in Cuba, President Biden's announcement to facilitate the transmission of remittances to the country by relatives residing in the United States is a welcome sign, and we hope that further initiatives can be taken by his administration to reverse the inhumane measures imposed on the people of Cuba by Donald Trump which add to the US economic blockade that every year since 1992, the United Nations General Assembly has voted to end.

Solidarity with the people of Afghanistan

27 August 2021

The Socialist International expresses its solidarity with the people of Afghanistan following the deadly terrorist attack at Kabul airport that claimed the lives of many civilians, including children, and military personnel securing the area. We mourn the loss of life and condemn this horrific attack in the strongest terms. There is never any justification for acts of terrorism, and the SI rejects this latest act of violence and the ideology and objectives of Islamic State in Khorasan Province, which has claimed responsibility. The terror attack was particularly heinous in its targeting of desperate and vulnerable people fleeing Afghanistan, in fear for their lives and futures following the takeover by the Taliban.

The return to power in Afghanistan by the Taliban is a grave setback for the development of the country and the advances made in terms of peace, democracy and human rights. There are already documented reports of serious violations of international humanitarian law and the imposition of restrictions by the Taliban in spite of their public statements to the contrary. The SI is particularly concerned at the implications of Taliban rule for the day-to-day lives of women and girls in Afghanistan and their right to personal liberty, freedom of movement, education, self-expression and employment. The international community must be vigilant to abuses of human rights in Afghanistan under the new regime, and work in conjunction with the UN Human Rights Council to monitor and prevent continued violations of fundamental rights and freedoms and the oppression of women and girls, ethnic and religious minorities and political opponents. Those who wish to leave Afghanistan following the withdrawal of US and NATO forces must be allowed to do so without fear of persecution and reprisals.

The Socialist International and its member parties call on the international community to offer their support to the civilian population of Afghanistan, beyond the immediate efforts being made to evacuate vulnerable and at risk civilians, using all available means to safeguard the well-being of who remain in the country. The security crisis in Afghanistan is exacerbating the existing humanitarian challenges faced in ensuring adequate food and medical supplies for the Afghan population, and a concerted international effort will be required if aid and humanitarian relief is to reach populations in desperate need of assistance.

Afghanistan cannot develop and prosper while continuing to lack basic security and while the human rights of its citizens are routinely violated. The SI, in line with its fundamental principles on democracy, sovereignty and human rights, will continue to advocate for an Afghan-led process of peace and reconciliation with the support of the international community. A sustainable and just solution to the decades of conflict in Afghanistan will only be achieved through an inclusive process that takes into account the political, humanitarian, human rights and development tracks.

SI condemns military coup in Guinea

5 September 2021

The Socialist International is deeply concerned by reports of a coup in Guinea, where President Alpha Condé has been shown in videos and images as being detained by members of the armed forces. The global social democratic movement will always reject the seizing of political power by military force, and President Condé must be immediately released.

Today's developments in Guinea have the potential to greatly increase instability and in this context, reports of gunfire on the streets of Conakry and injuries to civilians are very disconcerting. With contrasting claims emerging regarding the status of the president and the government, it is vital to prevent an escalation of the situation and avoid further violence.

The challenges faced by Guinea in regard to political stability, development and modernisation will not be resolved by this coup d'État, but will only be worsened without legitimate government in the interests of the Guinean people. For this to take place it is crucial that civilian control over the institutions of government prevails.

The Socialist International has accompanied Guinea and its people through their democratic transition in 2008 and subsequent electoral processes, progress which is severely jeopardised by the events of today. We will continue to be engaged in Guinea and in collaboration with relevant regional actors to work for peace and democracy in the country.

Meeting of the SI Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean, Cancun, Mexico

8-9 October 2021



Declaration of Cancun

Original: Spanish

The Socialist International Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean, meeting in the city of Cancun, Mexico, on 8-9 October 2021, expresses its satisfaction at having been able to carry out, in the framework of these challenging times, the first in-person meeting since its last gathering in Kingston, Jamaica, in December 2019.

The delegates and representatives of member parties and guests present also register their gratitude to the host party, the Institutional Revolutionary Party, PRI, of Mexico for its warm hospitality and fraternity that has ensured the success of the meeting.

COVID-19, which has struck in all corners of the world, has hit our region hard, particularly in terms of the loss of human life and the deterioration of the conditions and quality of life of our people, and has caused a drastic decline in our economies.

In its deliberations, the Committee insisted on the need to continue strengthening our health systems and to guarantee fair and timely access for all to the vaccine and other medicines and supplies necessary to combat the pandemic.

Member parties from throughout the region have reaffirmed the need to continue mobilizing the resources required to ensure that the post-pandemic recovery puts people at the centre, maintaining support programmes as long as they are needed, and promoting the recovery of economic activity and employment with a focus on the most vulnerable groups. All efforts required must be deployed in order to prevent the worrying inequality gap that exists from being exacerbated by the pandemic.

Democracy in the region faces tough challenges due to the health emergency that we are currently enduring. Strong democratic systems and nations with robust institutions have proven to be better prepared to deal with it. Our parties in the region must continue to strengthen citizen support and consolidate our electoral advances, as we have more suitable and democratic proposals than those emanating today from populist sectors of various origins.

A successful democracy also requires the full participation of women in the life of our political institutions and their incorporation in decision-making, a dimension that our organization promotes and defends.

The Committee expresses its resolute support for SI Vice-President Sandra Torres (UNE, Guatemala), who has not been able to be present at this meeting because the authorities in her country have prevented her from traveling. The process that she faces has dragged on for too long and the accusation against her stems from a political motivation to restrict her fundamental right to participate freely in public life in her country.

For the members of this Committee, the situation in which Torres is a victim is an expression of the politicization of justice ("Legal War" or Lawfare), which we denounce and which we are committed to fighting against throughout our region. Courts of justice, administrative bodies, parliaments and other instances, at the time of issuing and applying norms, must remain faithful to the nature of their functions, avoiding the danger of allowing themselves to be exploited and the temptation to seek an illegitimate influence on the political life of our countries.

The Committee stands in solidarity with Haiti, a nation that was recently struck by the assassination of its president Jovenel Moïse and then by a devastating earthquake, less than a month and a half apart. The Haitian Constitution and institutionality have been surpassed, the magistrates of its Supreme Court have not been appointed, no elections have been held to allow the renewal of parliament and even the Chief of its National Police holds today an interim appointment. Insecurity, kidnappings, and the presence of criminal gangs that act with total impunity are worsening day by day and with them the country's humanitarian crisis deepens and thousands of Haitians are driven to migrate. The Committee urges the SI member parties in Haiti to work towards a concerted, inclusive and participatory political solution that takes on the challenge of restoring the democratic legitimacy of its institutions and, for its part, the Committee undertakes to closely monitor the situation and actively support the initiatives that ensure these objectives.

After listening to the contributions of the delegates of its member parties in Venezuela, Acción Democrática (AD), Un Nuevo Tiempo (UNT) and Voluntad Popular (VP), who are participating in the negotiations currently underway in Mexico City between the Maduro regime and the

opposition, the Committee expresses its support for the process as a mechanism to achieve a peaceful, electoral and democratic solution to the crisis that the Venezuelan people have been living in and suffering for a long time. We call for the release of political prisoners, some of whom are in a grave state of health, and we express our deep concern at the poverty and inequality afflicting Venezuela today.

The Committee is in agreement that climate change is today the main challenge facing humanity, and its member parties express their determined commitment to continue working throughout the region to combat it. Latin America and the Caribbean is among the areas most affected globally by the phenomenon and by the consequences that follow, such as hurricanes and storms, floods, droughts, water scarcity and degradation of biodiversity, among others.

The Committee recognizes and congratulates once again the tireless and long-term work carried out by the SI on this matter. The member parties of our political family must redouble their efforts and urge the international community, governments, parliaments, civil society organizations and citizens, to remain mobilized and to act now in the face of this challenge, honouring the commitments of the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda.

Nicaragua a contemporary victim of absolute power

25 October 2021

Original: Spanish

Since the grave events of April 2018, when the violent repression of social protests by the government of Daniel Ortega left hundreds of fatalities among the thousands of citizens who demonstrated in the streets and cities of the country to make their voice heard for their rights, the sombre will of authoritarianism emerged in Nicaragua.

It is within this context that in recent months a number of citizens in opposition to the regime made known their aspirations to stand as presidential candidates in the elections on November 7, and ended up in prison. Today there are 37 opponents arrested, including seven who had made known their intention to run as candidate for the presidency.

Today, Ortega and his wife, Rosario Murillo, are registered as candidates for president and vice-president of the country and along with them are five other lists that were accepted by the current electoral bodies that will supervise the elections.

The United Nations, the European Union and the Organization of American States have spoken out and reiterated their concern over these developments, which indicate that elections can hardly be considered free, fair and transparent, faced with complaints of selective persecution in the country. The Nicaraguan Episcopal Conference (CEN), in a recent statement, stressed that a democratic state is characterized by the unrestricted subjection to the law by its authorities and the separation of powers. In Nicaragua, these elementary pillars of the rule of law are currently ignored and are weakened on a daily basis.

Anyone who expresses and promotes a position other than that advocated by the regime is considered an adversary not only of the government, but of the nation, and many have been persecuted for acts against sovereignty and treason against the fatherland. A compliant and government-controlled prosecutor's office is responsible for promoting these processes. The world of art and culture has not emerged unscathed either from this unstoppable wave of persecution.

The human rights violations of thousands of Nicaraguans in April 2018 led the SI to publicly denounce the state violence that eventually resulted in the death of hundreds of innocent

civilians, and the SI had called for the facts to be clarified and the responsibilities to be established. The SI's concern for Nicaragua and its commitment to follow up on the serious events of April 2018 was further reflected in its statement on the situation in Nicaragua on April 23, then in the resolution of its Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean in May, and by the declaration of its Council in Geneva in June, all in the same year, 2018. Finally, at its Council meeting in Santo Domingo in January 2019, with the participation of representatives of its member parties from all continents, the Socialist International took the decision to expel the FSLN for serious violations of human rights and democratic values in their country.

Today, two weeks before the elections, the SI once again reiterates its rejection of government interventionism and condemns the repression that the government has been deploying throughout the country, on Nicaraguan society as a whole. The regimes of one party and the restriction of freedoms and fundamental rights of the people are incompatible with democracy and contrary to the principles that inspire the Socialist International.

Urgent call to support the people of Myanmar

1 November 2021

The situation in Myanmar continues to be of grave concern to the Socialist International and its members, and requires the urgent attention of the international community. Millions in the country are in need of life-saving assistance and protection, faced with conflict and oppression, food insecurity, and the devastating effects of natural disasters and Covid-19. This predicament has worsened dramatically since the seizure of power by the military in February and subsequent repression of protestors, opposition figures and minority ethnic groups.

There is strong evidence of crimes against humanity and war crimes committed by the military regime in Myanmar. This has once more manifested itself in recent military assaults on Chin state in the north-west of the country, where the majority-Christian population is under sustained persecution.

The targeting of Christians in north-western Myanmar is strikingly similar to the ethnic cleansing perpetrated by the Burmese military against the Rohingya Muslim population of Rakhine state in 2017, and is once more causing death, destruction of property and livelihoods and internal displacement. These aggressive and tyrannical actions are intensifying and have the potential to escalate into a civil war. Further international action is required to protect the civilian population from violence and deliver humanitarian aid. This must be accompanied by efforts to ensure that power is returned to the democratically elected government of Myanmar.

We recognise the unprecedented step taken by the Association of South Eastern Nations (ASEAN) to block the participation of the illegitimate military leadership at its recent regional summit. As previously noted by the SI, the people of Myanmar require the assistance of the international community in order to place pressure upon the military to end violence and respect the will of the electorate.

Since the coup, the military has imprisoned more than 7000 people, including children. Despite recent promises of a major release of political prisoners, these have to date been extremely limited in scope with total lack of clarity on who will be freed and the terms of their release. Those detained continue to face inhumane conditions, torture and a denial of fundamental legal rights. Among the political prisoners are Myanmar's elected President, Win Myint, and State Counsellor, Aung San Suu Kyi, who are both currently being tried behind closed doors.

No one in Myanmar should be above the rule of law, least of all those responsible for the atrocities and human rights abuses committed across the country that have taken an almost unfathomable toll in terms of the physical injuries and loss of human life, and the emotional and psychological trauma. The leaders of the military junta who have ordered and authorised these actions must be held to account alongside those responsible for carrying out these crimes against humanity.

The Socialist International reiterates its full solidarity with the people of Myanmar who have been victims of so many atrocities, and its profound sadness at the intense humanitarian suffering caused and exacerbated by the Burmese military forces.

Lukashenko resumes closed trial of Statkevich and other political prisoners in Belarus



Opening of the closed trial in Homiel, 24 June 2021

The closed trial of Mikalai Statkevich, leader of our member party in Belarus, Narodnaya Hramada, NH, has resumed after a break since 4 November. The closed trial, which began on 24 June this year, is taking place inside Homiel, the prison where he is being held. Mikalai Statkevich, who has been denied his rights throughout the trial and has no access to legal representation or defence, has been incarcerated for almost a year and a half.

Political prisoners, Siarhei Tsikhanouski, Ihar Losik, Uladzimir Tsyhanovich, Dzmitry Papou and Artsiom Sakau, all of whom have also been in jail for more than a year, are also being tried.

COP26 - The challenge of saving our planet



The climate crisis is deepening, with emissions and temperatures continuing to rise and extreme weather events becoming more frequent and more intense. As countries across the world have struggled to deal with the devastating effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, action within the global community to address the climate crisis has fallen short of what will be required to prevent irreversible climate change. The damaging impact of the historical and current actions of humanity on the planet and the climate are a matter of fact. As the COP26 summit in Glasgow opens, the Socialist International once again urges united, swift and concerted action from all countries and governments, to prevent the planet from passing a tipping point beyond which permanent climate change is unavoidable.

In the last months, two major reports have been published that leave no room for doubt that on current trends, we are heading towards a climate change catastrophe. On 9 August, the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) presented its first major assessment report since 2013, noting the unprecedented changes taking place to the Earth's climate 'in every region and across the whole climate system'. It reiterates that without immediate, strong and sustained reductions in carbon dioxide emissions, ambitions to limit global warming to safe levels are unachievable. Regrettably, despite this year marking five years since the signing of the Paris Agreement, there is no evidence that we are on course to achieve such goals. After a temporary reduction in CO₂ emissions during 2020 as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, emissions are once again rising, as outlined in the United in Science 2021 report compiled by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), released on 16 September.

As underlined by the UN secretary general, we are as a planet way off course when it comes to the actions and commitments necessary to prevent this climate crisis from escalating into an environmental disaster from which there is no recovery. The United in Science 2021 report notes that it is likely that the threshold of a 1.5 degree increase above pre-industrial levels will be breached in the next five years. Although immediate and sustained reductions in CO₂ emissions could quickly bring benefits when it comes to air quality, according to the IPCC

report, even a stabilisation in global temperatures could now take 20-30 years, underlining how costly inaction could prove to be.

There is also overwhelming scientific consensus that global warming is behind the increased frequency in extreme weather events in recent years. The IPCC report confirmed that human-induced climate change is responsible for increasing the frequency and intensity of many weather and climate extremes in every region across the globe. Such events have in the last year alone caused great suffering, loss of life and environmental destruction as a result of wildfires, flooding, storms and heatwaves. The spiralling impacts of extreme weather on economies and societies must not be underestimated.

Governments around the world have the capacity to act with unprecedented speed and in cooperation, yet when it comes to the existential threat of climate change there remains a lack of urgency in global coordinated action, compounded by climate denial and an unwillingness to make necessary sacrifices for the future of the planet as a result of misguided self-interest. The effects of the pandemic make this moment in time particularly crucial, as emissions are now rapidly accelerating after a temporary hiatus as a result of Covid. More must be done on a global level to work for a green recovery after the pandemic and avoid a return to 'business as usual'.

The COP26 UN Climate Change Conference taking place in Glasgow is now underway. Due to the postponement of the summit last year, this is the first of the planned quinquennial global stocktakes agreed in 2015 at COP21, under which Parties are expected to re-evaluate their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) in light of the most recent climate science, and strengthen their existing commitments. The unconditional NDCs under the Paris Agreement are manifestly insufficient to limit global warming to the 2C goal, let alone 1.5C, with the emissions gap as large as ever.

It will therefore not be enough for world leaders to simply reiterate prior commitments. Parties must surpass 50% reductions in global emissions by 2030 and reach net zero emissions by 2050, an ambitious but necessary goal, if there is to be any chance of limiting global warming and preventing a climate catastrophe. It is clear that this should take place in line with the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, as developed countries are at present in a position to make earlier and deeper cuts to emissions. But it requires all countries to have a net zero goal, which to be achieved will need increased focus on green growth in developing countries and financial assistance in order to transition to a low-carbon economy.

The delay to COP26 was largely unavoidable due to the effects of the pandemic, but there is no excuse for continued delays in taking decisive action on a global level on climate change. Scientists, multiple UN bodies, environmental groups and organisations such as the Socialist International have for many years been documenting and analysing the phenomenon of human-induced climate change, outlining the steps necessary on a global level to prevent irreversible damage to our planet and advocating for all governments to come together to overcome this common threat. The SI has taken many initiatives on climate change, with the participation of senior government figures, experts and ministers in order to come up with concrete policy proposals and solutions for ensuring climate justice by tackling climate change without restricting development potential in the developing world.

The Socialist International will continue to be dedicated to advocating strong action on climate change through the efforts of its member parties and the regular work and initiatives of its regional and thematic committees on this issue, as well as of its statutory bodies. It is a task to be approached with the utmost seriousness and urgency, to secure the future of our shared planet and the welfare of the generations to come.

COP26 - Despite progress, threat of catastrophic climate change remains unacceptably high

15 November 2021



The Socialist International closely followed developments in Glasgow during the COP26 Summit, which focussed on crucial issues that have long been at the heart of the SI's global agenda. Members of this political family could be found among national delegations attending the conference, and the SI Secretary General was present, holding wide-ranging exchanges on the expectations of our International from the COP26 and the ongoing work of the SI to ensure that tackling the climate crisis remains a priority.

The single most important objective of the summit was for the countries and leaders of the world to make binding pledges on reducing emissions that would give a realistic chance of achieving the target agreed in Paris of limiting global warming to 1.5C. Keeping 1.5C alive requires, at a minimum, a 45% reduction in global emissions by 2030. As urged by the SI in advance of COP26, developed economies that are responsible for the bulk of current and historical emissions need to commit to reductions far in excess of that figure over this period.

As stated in the Glasgow Climate Pact, it is estimated that current nationally determined contributions (NDCs) would lead to greenhouse gas emissions that are 13.7% higher than 2010 levels in 2030. Analysis by Climate Action Tracker (CAT) of the NDCs show that the world is heading for at least 2.4C of heating, and that by 2030 it will already be too late to stay within the 1.5C target. This would be a catastrophe for the planet, and it is evident that deeper and earlier cuts to emissions are required. The inability or unwillingness of parties to commit to NDCs in line with the Paris Agreement temperature goal, means that COP26 is not the success we had hoped for, but it is nonetheless important that the declaration explicitly calls on parties to submit new or updated NDCs in advance of COP27, and that the UNFCCC secretariat will henceforth monitor progress towards these goals on an annual basis. Though COP26 has not delivered the required commitments on emissions reductions, the framework is in place to make this happen if the political will can be found. It therefore remains vitally important to maintain pressure on all governments that have not delivered 1.5C Paris Agreement compatible NDCs to urgently scale-up mitigation ambition in advance of COP27.

The importance of action by the world's largest economies cannot be understated. As recognised by the High Ambition Coalition, if all G20 countries were to commit to a 1.5C pathway, this could be enough to limit warming to 1.7C by 2100. Yet with regard to the immediate and deep cuts to emissions that are a precondition for limiting global temperature rises, too many of these high-emitters have shown insufficient ambition and in some cases an alarming lack of engagement, focusing on pledges to reach net zero emissions by much later in the century. Net zero targets should be acknowledged and are an important part of the overall solution, but long-term ambition cannot compensate for the short-term inadequacies of

current targets. Reaching net zero in 30 or 50 years will be in vain if short-term commitments are not dramatically increased. Still worse is the danger that the promise of net zero in the future gives rise to a “burn now, pay later” approach whereby short-term emissions remain unacceptably high as countries rely on untested and often unrealistic CO₂ removal techniques and offsetting strategies.

COP26 has seen some incremental progress in a number of significant areas that will contribute to the future inhabitability of the planet. For example, real headway has been made towards ending the use of coal worldwide, with more than 40 countries now committed to phasing out coal power and over 100 countries, organisations and financial institutions pledging to end financing of new coal, which should make it financially unviable. Nonetheless, the timeframe for ending coal-fired power needs to be brought forward in order to be in line with what is required to stay within 1.5C, and the large coal-dependent economies including Australia, China, India and the US need to commit to phasing out coal. Last minute changes to the text of the Glasgow Climate Pact, to remove any reference to a phase out of coal are disappointing and reflect the scale of the challenge that remains in moving towards a future free of fossil fuel. A swift and comprehensive end to all fossil fuel subsidies is an essential part of this process.

A landmark pledge by over 100 countries to reduce global methane emissions by 30% below 2020 levels by 2030 could, if met, prevent 0.2C of warming by the middle of the century. According to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), human-caused methane emissions can be reduced by up to 45% this decade, preventing 0.3C of warming, so it is crucial that this is seen as a starting point, with focus on increasing ambition, quantifying policies and goals that can be monitored on a national level, and encouraging major emitters of methane that are yet to sign up, such as China, Russia and India, to join the pledge.

A deal to halt and reverse deforestation by 2030, including over 100 world leaders representing 85% of the planet’s forests is a substantial step in the right direction, and includes countries with significant tracts of forest and deforestation activity such as Brazil, Indonesia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Forests naturally capture billions of tonnes of carbon annually, and deforestation activity accounts for approximately 10% of all global carbon emissions, making an end to deforestation an important component of emissions reduction, which will also boost efforts to safeguard biodiversity. Crucial to the success of this deal will be delivering the promised funding to protect forests, restore damaged land, tackle wildfires and support indigenous communities.

Funding remains a contentious issue, as wealthy nations have broken the promise made in Copenhagen in 2009 to deliver US\$100 billion per year to developing countries by 2020, to help adapt to climate change and mitigate further temperature rises. This failure to deliver on the target, recognised by all parties in the Glasgow Climate Pact, endangers trust and prevents progress. It is no secret that many countries’ emissions reduction goals are conditional on international support, making climate finance one of the most important components in delivering what has been pledged. As the SI has always stated, it is a matter of climate justice - the problem was largely created by countries in Europe, North America and east Asia, yet it is the southern hemisphere and in particular countries with low historical emissions that are suffering, and lack the means to cover heavy losses and humanitarian disasters, even if promised climate finance is delivered. The Glasgow Pact recognises the need for a stronger loss and damage mechanism to compensate vulnerable countries for climate impacts, but does not go far enough in ensuring funding to enable countries to help their citizens deal with regular climate-caused devastation.

The deadly effects of climate change and global warming are already upon us. Powerful testimony has been given at COP26 by those suffering from extreme weather events and others whose very existence is threatened by sea level rises. Though the science has been clear for many years, too many decision-makers have remained sceptical until they have witnessed record-breaking temperatures and the increased frequency of natural disasters. Following decades characterised by prevarication, denial and inaction there is now a sense of urgency and important impetus given by coalitions of countries united by their determination to safeguard the future of the planet.

Nonetheless, there remains a disconnect between the gravity of the situation and the consequences of not taking immediate action, and the pledges emerging from Glasgow. Half-measures and vacillation today cannot be put right in the future, and there is palpable frustration and anger around the world as millions have raised their voices in defence of the right of generations to come to an inhabitable planet. Though significant breakthroughs have been achieved at COP26, the scale of the climate emergency as a result of prior inaction means that there is a grave danger that the measures agreed are too little, too late, and will be seen in years to come as the moment when the last chance to step back from the precipice of irreversible and catastrophic climate change was missed. As COP26 comes to an end, there is still hope that the countries of the world can raise their collective ambition and unite to confront the greatest threat to humanity. The Socialist International and its members will continue to dedicate themselves wholeheartedly to this goal.

International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women

25 November 2021



SI Meeting at the 143rd Assembly of the IPU in Madrid

27 November 2021

For the first time in two years, due to the Covid19 pandemic, the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) held an in-person meeting of its Assembly, an occasion on which the Socialist International convened its usual meeting of parliamentarians from SI member parties attending that global assembly.

Extending a warm welcome to participants, the SI Secretary General noted the enthusiasm and sense of fraternity felt by all those present at being able to share this opportunity in person after such a long absence.



The agenda of the meeting included exchanges on issues to be addressed by the IPU Assembly and on the emergency items to be voted on. Equally, the meeting provided participants with the opportunity to share issues of concern in their respective countries.

Hana Jalloul, the newly elected Secretary for International Policy and Development

Cooperation of the PSOE, Spain, and a Member of the Assembly of Madrid, welcomed everyone, pleased that the city was hosting the IPU Assembly. She also conveyed greetings from the PSOE leader and President of the Spanish government, Pedro Sánchez, a Vice-President of the SI, committed to supporting social democracy around the world as the only viable response to the challenges we face.

Addressing the question of the emergency items to be voted on by the Assembly, the meeting heard from the Palestinian delegation, who informed on the current situation facing the Palestinian people affected by violent extremists attacking holy places in Palestine. It was reported that the change in government in Israel had not improved the situation and there was no plan for moving forward with the peace process. On the contrary, the eviction of Palestinians and the demolition of their homes in Jerusalem, Hebron and elsewhere was proceeding. It was highlighted that none of the international resolutions adopted by the UN have been implemented, and their calls continue for an end to the occupation, ceasing settlement activities, and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital.

The meeting heard from the Venezuelan participants on the current situation in that country. The member of Acción Democrática informed that their party had been seized, the report of the Electoral Observers of the EU accurately reflected that there was a lack of transparency, and the report of the UN human rights Commissioner, Michelle Bachelet, was damning. 87% of the population was facing poverty and forced migration was chronic. They were calling on international support for the holding of presidential and parliamentary elections.

The dire situation in the English speaking part of Cameroon was a subject of great concern, where it was reported that the existing accord was being steadily eroded by the French speaking part of the country, citizens were taking up arms and demanding liberation. There were many displaced people and it was common to find corpses littering the streets while the international community remained silent. The participant from the SDF made an appeal to the IPU to address this issue as an emergency. More than half the English speaking part of Cameroon had migrated to Nigeria and to Congo while the Cameroonian government deploys arms against them.

The meeting heard from the representative from Portugal, where the Socialist Party had been in power for 10 years and the country had undergone a recovery that had sustained and enabled cohesion policies at European level, enhancing European solidarity in face of the pandemic. The country was currently in a phase of transition ahead of new elections at the end of January and the PS was hopeful that they would win. Along with Spain, Portugal counted with around 80% of their population vaccinated, enabling them to deal more forcefully with

the catastrophic consequences of the pandemic. Solidarity with the developing world in terms of vaccination was essential.

The question of women's rights and gender equality was addressed by the representative from Hungary, who furthermore pointed out that in her country there was no democracy and the situation was dramatic. Her party, the MSzP, had a key role to play, but uniting the opposition to this fascist government was a challenge. However, after 11 years of Orban dictatorship, there was a good chance of winning the next elections.

The participant from Mozambique described two particular challenges his country was facing. The threat of terrorism was growing daily and becoming more visible, the latest attack close to the border with Tanzania. International support, particularly from Rwanda, was crucial and he expressed gratitude for the support and solidarity of the Portuguese parliamentarians in the European Parliament and the members of the international socialist family. In regard to the Covid19 pandemic, his country had been unable to vaccinate half the population of about 30 million people. They joined calls for fairness in the distribution of vaccines.

The current situation in Pakistan was highlighted, where a right wing government ruled, not understanding that extremism is a menace that leads to terrorism. The economic situation continued bad and the people had not received financial relief, while poverty and unemployment were on the increase. The ruling regime had no regard for parliament. The situation of Kashmir continued of concern, the people forced to live under a curfew. The PPP leader, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, had been very vocal in questioning the Pakistani regime's policies vis-à-vis Afghanistan, insisting on an inclusive government respecting the freedoms of all.

In regard to Cyprus, the meeting heard from representatives of both the CTP and the TDP of Northern Cyprus. Reference was made to the critical effects of the Covid19 pandemic and the current difficult situation following the international conference of 2017. It was pointed out that the longstanding dispute in the Eastern Mediterranean needed to be resolved within the framework of international law and required international support to reduce tension and should not be ignored. A call was made for greater engagement by the international community for a resumption of negotiations, and for social democrats in government to lead the way.

In Panama, where the SI member PRD was in government, there was a will to find inclusive solutions to issues affecting the country. The level of migration into the country was an increasing problem, and some of the migrants were in transit to North America. It was pointed out that all the countries involved had to face this question jointly, working together and addressing the problem in the country of origin. Concerning Covid19, big efforts had been made and there was a successful rate of vaccination. If the pandemic had shown something, it was that it was a common battle and we had to fight it together.

The representative from the USFP of Morocco described the situation in the country, where national and local elections had been held on the same day for the first time. The USFP increased its' seats in the parliament from 21 to 40 and is today the main opposition party. For the first time there are 96 women members of parliament representing also the south and mid central regions of the country. The USFP was working to listen to the people and to ensure a caring state offering social protection.

In the Democratic Republic of Congo, where the SI member UDPS was in government, it was reported that efforts were being made to ensure a social democratic policy that was people-centred. They had implemented a policy of free primary education, something that had taken years to achieve. A great challenge facing the country was the war in the East and they were looking to other social democratic governments for assistance and cooperation. International stability is threatened by Jihadism and a global response was needed.

In regard to Spain, it was pointed out that President Sánchez had demonstrated that social democracy was the antidote to liberal policies which had diminished people's rights. Spain had shown the way in vaccination and in donating vaccines, as well as policies such as minimum vital wage, and social and health protection. Their policies on refugees from Afghanistan was an example that they could manage crises at international level. Social justice, a just recovery and being a government that delivers were key and they were ready to work together with colleagues in the Socialist International.

In closing the meeting, the Secretary General noted that while the pandemic had delayed our in-person meetings, it had clearly not affected our solidarity and our resolve to work together. The many expressions of satisfaction at being able to meet face to face and share experiences was a great source of encouragement. During this difficult period the SI had remained active, connected with its members, and taking a stand as necessary on matters of concern to our movement. The work will continue on democracy building, conflict resolution, solidarity, the struggle against Covid19, advocating for vaccine equality, the effort to stop climate change and protect our planet, promoting human rights, and advancing our values and principles.

International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People

29 November 2021



In 1977, the General Assembly called for the annual observance of 29 November as the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People (resolution 32/40 B). On that day, in 1947, the Assembly adopted the resolution on the partition of Palestine (resolution 181 (II))

In resolution 60/37 of 1 December 2005, the Assembly requested the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian

People and the Division for Palestinian Rights, as part of the observance of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People on 29 November, to continue to organize an annual exhibit on Palestinian rights or a cultural event in cooperation with the Permanent Observer Mission of Palestine to the UN.

The resolution on the observance of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People also encourages Member States to continue to give the widest support and publicity to the observance of the Day of Solidarity.

29 INTERNATIONAL DAY OF
NOV SOLIDARITY
WITH THE
PALESTINIAN PEOPLE

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Mikalai Statkevich imminent sentencing in Belarus

9 December 2021



On 14 December, the sentencing of Mikalai Statkevich, chair of Narodnaya Hramada, the SI member party in Belarus, is scheduled to begin, following a closed trial that has taken place inside Homiel prison where he is incarcerated. During this sham trial, Statkevich has had no access to legal representation or defence and throughout the 560 days he has spent in detention, he has been denied all contact with his family, as the illegitimate regime of Alexander Lukashenko reveals its determination to suppress all

democratic forces in the country.

The sentencing of Mikalai Statkevich will be another dark day for those struggling for the political and human rights of the Belarusian people. For many years a central figure in the democratic opposition to the Lukashenko dictatorship, Statkevich has worked tirelessly, at the risk of his freedom, to bring change and democracy to Belarus and actively participated in the activities of the Socialist International, as the current co-chair of the SI Committee for the CIS, the Caucasus and the Black Sea.

Other members of Narodnaya Hramada have also been arrested and tried without due process, among them the secretary general of the party, Sergei Sparish, who has received a six-year sentence, and activist Andrei Khrenkov, condemned to five years' imprisonment. Both have already been detained for well over a year. The Socialist International reiterates its firm condemnation of the politically motivated detention and trial of Mikalai Statkevich, Sergei Sparish, Andrei Khrenkov and many others. The dictatorial Belarusian regime, lacking democratic legitimacy and popular support, has intensified its blatant oppression of the political opposition in order to maintain its grip on power.

The full solidarity of the Socialist International and its member parties is with the detained members of Narodnaya Hramada and all political prisoners in Belarus. We vigorously protest against this political persecution and demand the freedom of Mikalai Statkevich and all those who are unjustly incarcerated in Belarus. We reiterate our call for members worldwide and the wider international community to take action in support of those who have sacrificed their freedom for the cause of democracy in Belarus, and to exert pressure on the regime in order for the true will of the people to be freely expressed.

Mikalai Statkevich sentenced to 14 years

14 December 2021



Mikalai Statkevich, chair of the SI member party Narodnaya Hramada, NH, and co-chair of the SI Committee for the CIS, Caucasus and Black Sea, has been sentenced today to 14 years in prison in Belarus following a sham trial behind closed doors. Throughout the 565 days he has spent in detention, Statkevich has had no access to legal representation or defence and he has been

denied all contact with his family, as the illegitimate regime of Alexander Lukashenko continues its determination to suppress all democratic forces in the country.

Along with Statkevich, five other political prisoners were also sentenced today: blogger Siarhei Tsikhanouski, who had intended to run as a presidential candidate against Lukashenko, sentenced to 18 years; Ihar Losik, a media consultant for Radio Liberty, sentenced to 15 years; Uladzimir Tsyganovich, a blogger, sentenced to 15 years; Artsyom Sakau, who ran a YouTube channel Country for Life, sentenced to 16 years; and Dmitry Popov, a moderator for Country for Life, sentenced to 16 years.

Previously, other members of Narodnaya Hramada have also been tried without due process, among them the secretary general of the party, Sergei Sparish, who has received a six-year sentence, and activist Andrei Khrenkov, condemned to five years' imprisonment.

The Socialist International vigorously protests against this outrageous political persecution and repression and calls for international condemnation of this sentencing. Lukashenko must be held accountable, and the SI reiterates its previous call for action to be taken in support of all those who have sacrificed their freedom for the cause of democracy in Belarus.

Mikalai Statkevich, who has worked tirelessly at great personal risk to bring change and democracy to Belarus, has so far been held in isolation for 565 days, and previously he served five years in prison for running as a presidential candidate against Lukashenko in 2010. The Socialist International will never cease in calling for freedom for Mikalai Statkevich and for all political prisoners in the country, and for full respect for the freedoms and rights of all the people of Belarus.



**The Socialist International
congratulates Gabriel Boric and
the Chilean people on the election
results of Sunday 19 December
2021**

SI condemns violence in Kazakhstan

7 January 2022

The Socialist International condemns the deadly violence used during the course of recent anti-government protests in Kazakhstan. Though the protests are reported to have started peacefully, the situation significantly deteriorated, leading to the deeply regrettable loss of multiple lives among both protesters and police.

The orders given to troops by President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev to use lethal force against protesters without warning is a dangerous and illegal move that seeks to deny people the right to peaceful protest and freedom of expression and is in clear violation of the principles of necessity and proportionality. Violence must end on all sides, but the government and its

security forces have a clear legal responsibility to avoid the use of deadly force and must never indiscriminately target protesters.

This troubling situation is made more complex by the lack of verifiable information emerging from Kazakhstan, exacerbated by severe disruption to communications networks in the country. These disturbances have made it impossible to establish contact with the leadership of the Nationwide Social Democratic Party (OSDP), SI member party in Kazakhstan, since the outbreak of the protests. At this difficult time the full solidarity of the SI is with the OSDP and its members, and all those struggling for human rights and democratic values in Kazakhstan.

For too many years Kazakhstan has been in the grip of an authoritarian government that has not tolerated any dissent and persecuted opposition parties. The protests, triggered by a doubling in the price of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG), reveal the deep underlying and legitimate grievances from Kazakh citizens against a regime that has overseen drastic economic and social decline. The government of Kazakhstan must turn its attention to addressing the concerns of its population, allowing democratic opposition, tackling corruption and offering credible solutions to the severe economic difficulties faced by many Kazakhs.

SI calls for swift restoration of democracy in Mali

9 January 2022

The Socialist International is deeply concerned by the delays announced to elections due to be held in Mali next month and calls on the transitional government to expedite the restoration of democracy in the country. It is unacceptable to all democrats that Mali, which has suffered two military coups in the last 18 months, is facing an extended period under the leadership of a regime that took power through a coup and has no democratic legitimacy.

The possibility raised by the recommendations of the National Refoundation Conference that elections are delayed by up to five years risks setting a dangerous precedent where those who have overthrown democratically elected governments are able to maintain a grip on power indefinitely without elections. If this goes unchallenged, Mali and other countries of the region could be further destabilised, as other groups may seek to overturn governments by force in the absence of elections, in particular if there are no serious consequences to this clear subversion of the democratic process.

In this regard, the SI is encouraged by the firm position taken by ECOWAS today in response to the announcement of the delay, and urges the transitional government to stick to the agreed timeframe for the elections. Any delay to the holding of elections beyond 27 February is in direct contradiction to the agreement reached by the transitional government and ECOWAS in the wake of the most recent coup in May 2021.

The SI reiterates its view that the current interim president came to power illegitimately and its vigorous condemnation of the military coups he led, which have stolen democracy away from the people of Mali. The SI member parties in Mali, the RPM and ADEMA-PASJ, continue to play a leading role among the democratic forces in the country and have our full support and solidarity. Only through the restoration of democracy can full rights and freedoms be guaranteed for all Malians.

SI demands release of President Kaboré in Burkina Faso

24 January 2022



Burkina Faso has today seen the destruction of its constitution and democratic order following an uprising of the military forces that began yesterday, which the Socialist International condemns in its strongest terms.

President of the Republic, Roch Marc Christian Kaboré, from the SI member party People's Movement for Progress, MPP, and other members of the government, have been detained against their will.

The military has now torn up the constitution, dissolved government and parliament, implemented a curfew, and closed the country's borders.

In the face of this military coup, the SI expresses its firm solidarity with President Kaboré, with the MPP, and with the people of Burkina Faso. The President, who called today for safeguarding the democratic achievements of the country, must be released unconditionally, as must the others who are being held.

The military forces have destroyed years of work by the people of Burkina Faso to bring about respect for democracy, human rights, freedoms and security. It is not acceptable to rob the people of their democracy, built with their efforts to secure a life in peace, and an open and secure society.

In the last year and a half, three democratically elected governments and heads of state in West Africa - in Mali, Guinea and today in Burkina Faso - have suffered military coups against their people.

The Socialist International, the world's largest political family of social democrats, has always been committed to working with its member parties across the globe to defend and advance democracy, freedoms and human rights for all, and in these endeavours it will never cease.

SI observes presidential elections in Costa Rica

6 February 2022



SI Secretary General Luis Ayala with presidential candidate Jose Maria Figueres, during the first round of the elections in Costa Rica, 6 February 2022



SI Secretary General, Luis Ayala, with Kattia Rivera, President of the PLN, Costa Rica, and SI Vice-President



Meeting with members of the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party, PSOE, in Madrid

11 February 2022

PSOE Secretary for International Policy and Cooperation, Hana Jalloul, SI Secretary General, Luis Ayala, and PSOE Secretary for Equality, Andrea Fernández



Meeting of the SI Presidium on Ukraine

19 February 2022



In light of the perilous and deeply worrying security situation developing in Ukraine, the SI Presidium convened for an online meeting on 19 February 2022, with participation from the global leadership of the Socialist International. This allowed all those present to hear diverse perspectives on the situation and benefit from the collective insight of the social democratic political family on the urgent and challenging scenario that is facing Europe and the world.

There was an overwhelming sentiment, expressed by all those who intervened, of the necessity to avoid war in Ukraine at all costs. Participants reflected on the fundamental commitment of the global social democratic movement to peace and conflict resolution, and the catastrophic human cost that a war would bring, urging all parties to find a way to resolve their differences through diplomatic means. Members of the Presidium reiterated their faith in the multilateral approach and the rules-based world order, underlining the need for the United Nations to have a central role in mediating in the crisis, with the concern that the UN was being marginalised at a crucial moment in a potential military conflict that could have profound implications for world peace.

Issues raised during the interventions of Presidium members included the importance of upholding the principles of national sovereignty with regard to Ukraine and the need for international law to be respected at all times. Also of paramount concern was the respect for human rights and the rights of minority populations. In the wider context of security, strong calls were made for progress on disarmament and for coordinated multilateral action to address the threats posed by new forms of weaponry and warfare.

Many of those participating underlined the role of the SI in communicating the concerns of the global social democratic movement on this issue, and also through initiatives building on the common principles of the organisation, working for a diplomatic solution in the spirit of the Socialist International.

The conclusions of the Presidium are presented in the following statement.

Statement of the SI Presidium on Ukraine

19 February 2022

The Socialist International Presidium, meeting on 19 February 2022, expresses its grave concern over the prevailing security situation in Ukraine and its wider implications. In line with the fundamental principles of the global social democratic family and the shared values and objectives of all SI member parties, the SI will continue to work for a peaceful solution to the current tensions and urges all parties to do their utmost to avoid the catastrophe of war.

The threat of war

A war in Ukraine would be disastrous on all levels, and inevitably lead to large numbers of casualties on both sides and severe and long-lasting damage to livelihoods and economic prosperity. The unquestionable priority at this time is therefore to avoid war at all costs, sparing no effort and exhausting all possibilities for de-escalation. This includes a commitment to end the hostilities in eastern Ukraine that have escalated in recent days and are further destabilising a precarious situation. The SI will continue to support any diplomatic efforts aimed at preventing war in Ukraine, recalling that all parties have expressed their determination and desire to avoid this devastating outcome.

The multilateral approach

The SI reiterates its firm conviction in the role of multilateralism to resolving disputes and conflicts between countries. The SI has always supported the rules-based order enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, which as the cornerstone of the multilateral world society, must be central to this process, acting as a mediator and guarantor in efforts to resolve tensions between Russia, Ukraine and other parties to the conflict. The OSCE also has an important role to play in promoting dialogue and monitoring the situation from the perspective of security and human rights.

Finding multilateral solutions to conflicts requires a commitment to diplomacy, and respect for international law. It also requires an end to violence, provocations and threats of aggression aimed at undermining and destabilising the situation and creating a pretext for war.

Sovereignty and human rights

In line with the UN Charter the right of all states to territorial integrity and sovereignty must be respected, and the internationally recognised and sovereign borders of Ukraine are inviolable. Any invasion of Ukraine, or the use of external force to overthrow its democratically elected government would be in clear violation of international law and the principles of sovereignty and self-determination.

We also reiterate and emphasise the importance of defending human rights and minority rights in every context, and each government has a duty to ensure that the human rights of all those residing in its territory are respected, without discrimination on the basis of political beliefs or ethnic background. Reports of violations of human rights should be addressed as a matter of the highest priority, with the involvement of independent observers as necessary.

The fundamental democratic principles upon which our movement is founded enshrine the belief that all people have the right to freely elect their governments and leaders. Governments gain their legitimacy through the freely expressed will of their people and have in their turn a sovereign right to make their own decisions regarding the security and well-being of the country, on the condition that these actions do not diminish the sovereignty, security and well-being of others.

Working for disarmament

The SI continues to support efforts for disarmament, underlining the benefits of joint security through disarmament and cooperation. This is particularly relevant as a conflict in Ukraine has

the potential to draw in the nuclear-armed states, with the possibility of catastrophic consequences for the entire world.

We welcome the recent joint statement issued by the leaders of the five nuclear-weapon states on preventing nuclear war and avoiding arms races and support multilateral efforts aimed at hastening the process of nuclear disarmament, with the ultimate aim of a world free from nuclear weapons. We must also be vigilant to the changing threats emerging from recent technological developments, with specific focus on the dangers of unregulated use of drones and the rise of cyber warfare.

The role of the SI

The Socialist International continues to have a role as a unique forum in which parties united by their shared political and ideological beliefs from all continents can cooperate to advance their common values and where differences are discussed in a spirit of friendship and partnership. This has been a characteristic of the work of the SI and we will remain engaged on this issue and pursue initiatives for the advancement of de-escalation and the resolution of this conflict. In the tradition of the Socialist International, we will strive to advance the causes of peace and democracy, multilateralism and human rights through dialogue and collaboration with members of our global family on all sides.

The integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine must be respected

22 February 2022

The Socialist International is gravely concerned that Russia has chosen to ignore the path of dialogue, diplomacy and negotiation which the international community, including our International, has strongly advocated. Instead, Russia yesterday chose to unilaterally recognise Donetsk and Luhansk as independent republics and has sent tanks and troops to these areas of Ukraine.

This act is a violation of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine, which we firmly condemn. This action by Russia, which opens a dangerous new juncture, brings with it an escalation of tensions that will benefit no one.

In line with our strong convictions, the role of multilateralism is key to solving disputes and conflicts, and therefore last week we supported and called on all parties involved to seek a resolution to differences through diplomatic means, respecting international law and international borders. The Secretary General of the United Nations has expressed concern over the latest move by Russia, as a "violation" and "inconsistent with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations", a position the Socialist International fully shares.

Our International will continue to closely follow the situation on the ground and remain engaged in support of the people of Ukraine and of a peaceful resolution.

Socialist International condemns Russian invasion of Ukraine

24 February 2022

The Socialist International wholly condemns the Russian invasion of Ukraine which began at dawn today, 24 February, with the aerial bombardment of targets across the Ukrainian territory. It is a tragedy that diplomatic efforts have failed to prevent this war and the catastrophic humanitarian cost it will bring in terms of lost life and human suffering. We echo the words of the United Nations Secretary General in calling on President Putin to end this

offensive and return his troops to Russia, in order that a truly devastating ground war may be averted.

This premeditated war of aggression, described by Russia as a 'special military operation', comes after months of provocation and belligerence. It follows the unilateral recognition of Donetsk and Luhansk as independent republics and the sending of Russian tanks and troops to those areas of Ukraine on 22 February, an act condemned by our International and the international community as a violation of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine which is wholly inconsistent with the Charter of the United Nations.

The Socialist International further rejects the claims made by the Russian president over the sovereign territory of Ukraine and its allegations of oppression and genocide, repeated as a pretext for the invasion that began this morning. The responsibility for this war and the death, suffering and destruction it will bring, lies with Russia, which must be held accountable.

Today Ukraine and its people are at war, as a result of an attack which all those in the world who value peace must oppose. We offer our full solidarity to the people and government of Ukraine in the face of the existential threat posed by this hostile invasion and urge the United Nations and the international community to defend the UN Charter, international norms, the rules-based order and the sovereignty of Ukraine by standing firm against this unjustified act of aggression.

SI receives delegation from the PNP, Jamaica

28 February 2022



The SI Secretary General, Luis Ayala, was pleased to receive Fitz Jackson MP, Senator Janice Allen and Hugh Graham MP, a delegation from The People's National Party, PNP, of Jamaica, at the Socialist International Secretariat.

Decision regarding membership of A Just Russia-Patriots-For the Truth Party

7 March 2022

The Socialist International has been following with grave concern the position of the party A Just Russia-Patriots-For the Truth in support of the horrific war waged by Russia against Ukraine.

During the online discussions of our Presidium held on the 19th of February with leaders of our political family from different continents of the world, the fundamental commitment of the global social democratic movement to peace was clearly stated, underlining the catastrophic human cost that a war would bring, which should be avoided at all costs. The members of the Presidium reiterated their faith in the multilateral approach and the need to resolve differences through diplomatic means, working for a peaceful solution to the tensions and urging all parties to do their utmost to avoid the catastrophe of war. In the SI we have always supported the rules-based order enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, whereby internationally recognised borders must be respected as well as the territorial integrity and sovereignty of all states.

Less than 48 hours after the meeting of the Presidium of the Socialist International, on the 21st of February, Russia chose to unilaterally recognise Donetsk and Luhansk as independent republics and sent tanks and troops to these areas of Ukraine. Subsequently, in the early hours of the 24th, with the aerial bombardment of targets across the Ukrainian territory, the Russian invasion of Ukraine began. Reacting swiftly to these deplorable actions which contravene international law, and in line with our shared principles and our dedication to preserve and ensure peace between nations and peoples, the Socialist International immediately expressed its unequivocal condemnation.

The humanitarian tragedy that has ensued is indefensible. Thousands have been killed, including children. More than one and a half million people have been forced to flee their homes, leaving family and loved ones behind. Many remain in Ukraine, forced to fight, or attempting to shelter without food or water in towns and cities whilst the bombing in civilian areas continues despite Russia saying from the outset it would not do so. Russia has allegedly used illegal weapons such as thermobaric ‘vacuum’ and cluster bombs, and it continues to hold the threat of nuclear war over Ukraine and the international community at large.

In supporting the illegitimate use of military force by Russia in Ukraine and ignoring international action in favour of peace, dialogue and understanding, A Just Russia-Patriots-For the Truth party is in violation of the Ethical Charter of the Socialist International. The declared positions adopted by the party on this issue are neither in alignment with the Declaration of Principles of the SI, which should guide the policies and actions of all our member parties.

In light of the graveness of the current situation in Ukraine and the unwillingness of the party to reassess its position in the face of the indefensible acts committed by Russian forces in that country, the Ethics Committee has made the difficult decision that the only appropriate course of action is to cease the membership of A Just Russia-Patriots-For the Truth party in the Socialist International, in accordance with the Ethical Charter. This decision has the full support of the President and the Secretary General of the Socialist International.

This global political organisation of the Socialist International stands firm in the defence of its principles and values which are shared by all those who are its members. It has always stood as a platform for peace, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and we strive for a world where nations can live in peace despite our unique differences.



Socialist International celebrates International Women's Day

8 March 2022

SI expresses deep concern for the welfare of Almazbek Atambayev

31 March 2022

The Socialist International, the worldwide organisation of socialist, social democratic and labour parties, expresses its deep concern for the well-being of Almazbek Atambayev, the former president of Kyrgyzstan and former leader of the SI-member party in that country, the Social Democratic Party of Kyrgyzstan, SDPK. Atambayev, who was first detained in 2019, has been suffering from ill health during his incarceration, and was sentenced in his absence to a jail term of 11 years and 2 months.

The detention, trial and sentencing of Almazbek Atambayev have not been conducted in line with the Kyrgyz Code of Criminal Procedure, in stark contravention of international judicial norms and the legal and human rights of the defendant. Despite Atambayev not attending court due to his ill health, the trial continued in a closed session, denying him the opportunity to properly defend himself. It is imperative that the former president is granted his full legal rights and that the procedures are held openly and transparently, free from political influence and interference.

The SI is further concerned by reports from family members who have visited Atambayev that he is being subject to mistreatment during his detention, corroborated by bruises found on his legs and arms by the National Center for the Prevention of Torture. He has also been forced in an inhumane manner by officers to stand barefoot in the snow dressed in only his underwear, exacerbating his health conditions, and brought to the court against his will in spite of his ill health. The Kyrgyz authorities must ensure that these allegations are fully investigated and appropriate action is taken to ensure the human rights of Almazbek Atambayev are guaranteed at all times.

The SI has closely followed recent political developments in Kyrgyzstan, both through the work of its regional committee, and by engaging in dialogue with various political actors in the country. It remains ready to contribute in any way it can to bring a positive solution to this deplorable situation, in order that justice may be allowed to take its course, and will continue to offer its support and solidarity to the SDPK in its efforts to advance the common objectives of socialists and social democratic parties around the world.

SI observes second round of presidential elections in Costa Rica

3 April 2022



Presidential candidate Jose Maria Figueres, from SI member party the PLN; SI Secretary General, Luis Ayala; chair of SICLAC and the PRD, Dominican Republic, Miguel Vargas; Peggy Cabral, member of the leadership of the PRD; and Angelita Vargas, during the second round of elections, 3 April 2022

Socialist International condemns war crimes in Ukraine

4 April 2022

The Socialist International unreservedly condemns the massacre of civilians by Russian forces in Ukraine, the true scale of which was devastatingly laid bare over the last two days in the commuter town of Bucha, northwest of Kyiv. Since the Russian retreat from areas around Kyiv, concrete evidence has emerged of war crimes committed by invading forces during their advance on, occupation of and retreat from those areas. In Bucha, the bodies of unarmed Ukrainian civilians have been found in mass graves and in the streets, some with their hands bound, close gunshot wounds and evidence of torture. There can be no question that the most heinous crimes against humanity have been committed by the occupiers in Bucha and elsewhere in Ukraine.

Our entire International grieves with those who have lost loved ones during the Russian invasion. The most recent report of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) records more than 1,400 civilian deaths in Ukraine since the start of the invasion, with the true total believed to be considerably higher. The majority of the casualties accounted for in the report were caused by missile and air strikes and shelling, and it does not include the deaths uncovered in Bucha over the weekend or numerous reported civilian casualties in locations where intense hostilities are ongoing. These are dark moments for humanity, and concrete and united action is needed as a matter of utmost urgency to prevent further atrocities and loss of life.

Tragically, the evidence of war crimes in Ukraine is by no means limited to the areas around Kyiv. Russian forces have repeatedly and systematically directed attacks against civilian populations, using explosive weapons with a high impact area against civilian targets, including the heartless bombing of a maternity hospital, theatre and art school in Mariupol in recent weeks. Ukrainians in occupied areas have been forcibly relocated to Russia and harrowing reports have come of rape and sexual violence against women and girls in areas under Russian control. Each of these acts constitutes a war crime.

There are no words strong enough to adequately condemn the actions of those who torture, rape and murder innocent and defenceless civilians. Each and every one of these crimes must be independently investigated, with those responsible held accountable and brought to justice. This accountability extends to those in the military chain of command who ordered and oversaw these actions; the ultimate responsibility for the death, destruction and suffering since the start of the illegal Russian invasion of Ukraine lies with President Putin, who has under false pretences launched this unprovoked attack on a neighbouring country.

The Socialist International and its members have been deeply moved by the tragic and avoidable suffering of the Ukrainian people and once more offer their utmost sympathy and solidarity to all those who have suffered as a result of this illegal war. The international community must continue to stand firm against this criminal aggression and pursue all available means to bring an end to the fighting and get humanitarian assistance to those who are in truly desperate need.

Socialist International SG attends the PAICV Congress in Cabo Verde

10 April 2022





President of the PS, Portugal and SI Vice-President, Carlos César, and SI Secretary General, Luis Ayala, at the PAICV Congress in Cabo Verde

Meeting in Lisbon with the Socialist Party of Portugal

14 April 2022

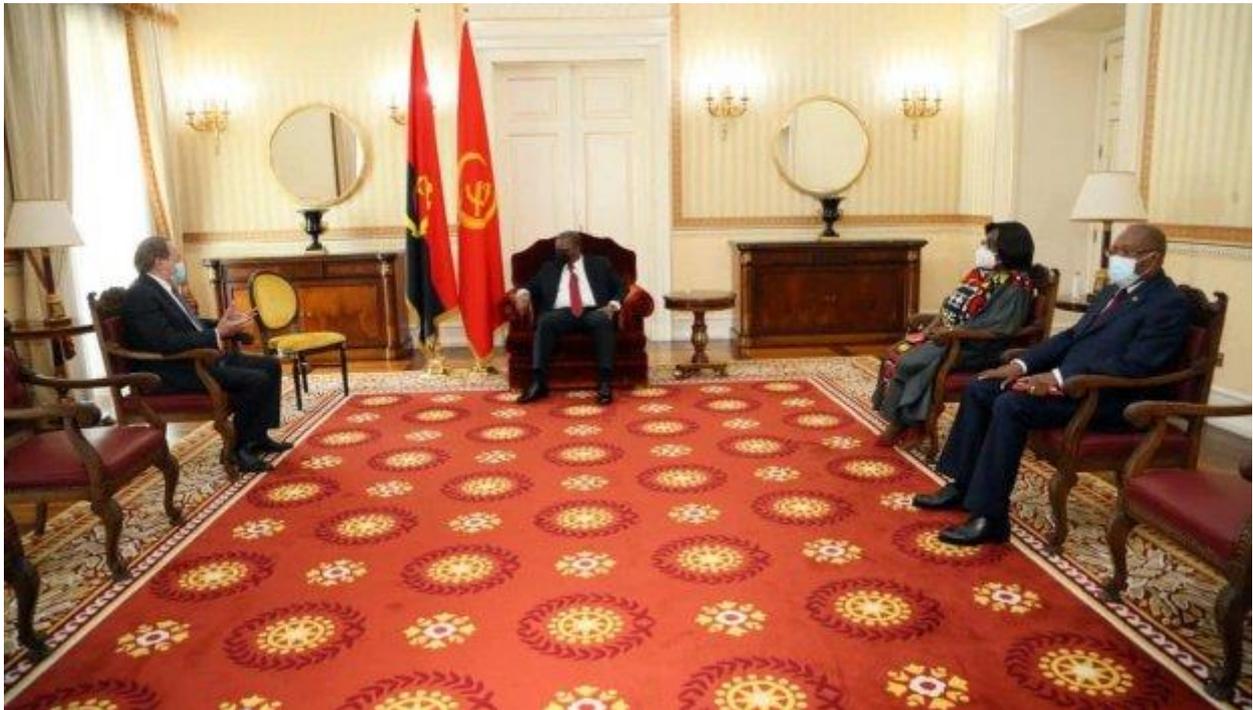
The National Secretary for International Relations, Jamila Madeira, received the Secretary General of the Socialist International, Luis Ayala, at the PS national headquarters. Issues relating to the Socialist International and the international political situation were addressed during discussions.



Photos : José António Rodrigues/PS

SI Secretary General in Angola

18 April 2022



His Excellency President João Lourenço of Angola receives Secretary-General of the Socialist International, Luis Ayala

In support of justice for Atambayev in Kyrgyzstan

25 April 2022



*April.kg, TV
Channel, 25 April
2022*

Несколько дней назад Кыргызстан посетил генеральный секретарь Социалистического Интернационала о Луис Айала. Он приехал на заседание по делу об октябрьских событиях 2020 года, навесил экс-президента Алмазбека Атамбаева в ИК №27 села Молдовановка, почтил память погибших в мемориальном комплексе "Ата-Бейит".

Socialist International Secretary General: We see lack of freedom and rights

24.kg, 25 April 2022



Hearing of the criminal case on the October 2020 riots continues in the Pervomaisky District Court of Bishkek. Farid Niyazov, ex-chief of the presidential staff, was brought to the court under escort. Former head of state Almazbek Atambayev was not brought

to court. The Secretary General of the World Organization of Socialist and Social Democratic Parties (Socialist International) Luis Ayala is present at the trial today. He said that today he would visit the former president Almazbek Atambayev in the prison colony 27.

Socialist International Secretary General: 'We see deficit of human rights and freedoms in Kyrgyzstan with Atambaev's case as example'

AKI Press, 25 April 2022

"We follow the situation in Kyrgyzstan with deep concerns," Socialist International Secretary General Luis Ayala told reporters today. "Of course, we are concerned about fate of [ex-President] Atambaev. We follow the situation in Kyrgyzstan with deep concerns, since democracy needs fairness," he said. The Socialist International Secretary General said they see themselves as democrats, who fight for freedom and fairness all over the world.



SI SG after having met President Almazbek Atambayev in Prison, with his son Khadyrbek Atambayev



SI condemns attempted assassination in Guinea-Bissau

9 May 2022

The Socialist International has been following with concern the increasing political insecurity in Guinea-Bissau, and condemns unreservedly the assassination attempt on Agnelo Regala, a member of parliament and leader of opposition party the Union for Change, UM, which took place on Saturday 7 May.

Parties of the opposition in Guinea-Bissau, including the SI member party the PAIGC, have reported that they have received threats against themselves and their families. Such reports, along with fears from the opposition over the rise of a dictatorial regime in the country, are deeply concerning and we call on the government to ensure that democracy, freedom and the fundamental human rights enshrined in the constitution are thoroughly and consistently respected.

The SI calls on the government to lead an immediate enquiry to find and bring to justice the perpetrators in the case of Agnelo Regala, and in doing so reassure the people of Guinea-Bissau that such political intimidation and violence will never be tolerated.

The Socialist International has a long history of supporting the efforts of all those working to strengthen and advance our principles of democracy and social justice, along with peace, freedoms and rights, and will always continue to do so.

SI denounces further repression of the opposition in Turkey

13 May 2022

The SI strongly denounces the sentencing of Ms. Canan Kaftancıoğlu, Chair of Istanbul's branch of the Republican People's Party, CHP, a full member party of the Socialist International, to almost five years in prison and a ban on any further political work for a series of tweets she made during the mayoral political campaign in Istanbul in 2019. The CHP candidate, Ekrem İmamoğlu, won those elections, taking the post from the AKP, the party of president Erdogan, which had held the mayoral position for the previous 25 years.

Originally sentenced to ten years in prison after campaigning on behalf of the CHP, an appeal at the Court of Cassation has now reduced the sentence to four years and eleven months and she has been charged with 'insulting a public official', 'openly degrading the state of the Republic of Turkey' and 'insulting the president'.

The Socialist International condemns the Turkish government's attempt to silence the opposition in this way by fabricating such charges, as well as the entire trial process which has been unlawful and which goes against Canan Kaftancıoğlu's fundamental human right to free speech.

It is utterly unacceptable that the government is attempting to remove Canan Kaftancıoğlu from her political responsibilities, and it sets a grave precedent for the future of other opposition figures. The Socialist International has previously highlighted the mounting democratic erosion of Erdogan's government and now reiterates that the Turkish president must abide by and uphold the universal rules of law and democracy.

The SI calls for the immediate annulment of the charges against Canan Kaftancıoğlu and will continue to closely monitor her case and political developments in Turkey. The government's

actions reflect the growing strength of the opposition, and the Socialist International stands with the will of the Turkish people who are demanding a fair, democratic and just society, where all human rights and freedoms are protected.

The SI reiterates urgent call for medical attention for Almazbek Atambayev

14 May 2022

The Socialist International is critically concerned for the health and well-being of the former president of Kyrgyzstan, Almazbek Atambayev, former leader of the Social Democratic Party of Kyrgyzstan, SDPK, who has so far already served over one thousand days in prison.

On 31 March 2022 the SI made a public call for justice and for the protection of his health, and since then, the SI Secretary General visited President Atambayev in his cell in Kyrgyzstan and witnessed his startling decline in physical health.

The SI has appealed on a number of occasions to the government of Kyrgyzstan to ensure that the former president receives medical attention as a matter of the utmost urgency, but until this date, President Atambayev has received no medical care of any kind. The family of the former president, along with our global political family, is now gravely concerned for his life.

As the Socialist International has previously stated, the detention, trial and sentencing of Almazbek Atambayev have not been conducted in line with the Kyrgyz Code of Criminal Procedure, in stark contravention of international judicial norms and the legal and human rights of the defendant. President Atambayev has not had the opportunity to defend himself, and is now too ill to properly attend the ongoing trial personally. He has also been subject to mistreatment and abuse in prison, which has been corroborated by bruises found on his legs and arms by the National Center for the Prevention of Torture.

Medical attention for prisoners is a fundamental human right. Such essential care is recognised by the United Nations, of which Kyrgyzstan is a member, in the UN Human Rights Charter, in the Basic Principles for the Treatment of Prisoners, adopted by the General Assembly in 1990, which states that prisoners should have access to health services without discrimination.

The Socialist International once again calls on the government of Kyrgyzstan to uphold its duty and responsibility, as it has pledged to do as a member of the United Nations and in line with the fundamental pillars of a democratic society, protecting the rights of their citizens, to immediately facilitate urgent medical attention and care to President Atambayev. The Socialist International will actively continue to monitor this situation and will not cease in its efforts to seek justice for Almazbek Atambayev.

SI welcomes response to our call for medical attention for Almazbek Atambayev

25 May 2022



The Socialist International welcomes the response of the government of Kyrgyzstan to our call by finally facilitating medical care for former President Atambayev, former leader of SI member the Social Democratic Party of Kyrgyzstan, SDPK, who has served over one thousand days in prison and suffered grave ill health, as well as having been subjected to mistreatment and abuse whilst incarcerated.

The Secretary General of the Socialist International, Luis Ayala, visited President Atambayev in his prison cell in April and witnessed his startling decline in health. The Secretary General has, since then, been calling on the Kyrgyz authorities for urgent medical attention for the former president, as is his fundamental human right.

The SI welcomes the news that President Almazbek Atambayev has now been moved to the National Cardiology Center for medical examination and treatment, and insists that he stay hospitalised for thorough and ongoing treatment.

The Socialist International reiterates that the detention, trial and sentencing of President Almazbek Atambayev violates the Kyrgyz Code of Criminal Procedure and breaches international judicial norms and the legal and human rights of the defendant.

The Socialist International extends its best wishes to the former president, and his family, for a full recovery back to health.

Meeting of the SI Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean, La Romana, Dominican Republic

3-4 June 2022



Original: Spanish

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. He expressed his confidence that the PRD and its president will continue to be the voice of the progressive forces in national politics and noted the support of the entire social democratic political family in this regard. Luis Ayala stressed that although we are in difficult times due to the pandemic, the conflict in Ukraine and its effects on the global economy, the SI remains active and mobilised to respond to various challenges. As an example, he recalls some recent actions of the SI, such as the organisation's sanction of the Just Russia party for not having made a determined commitment to peace; calls for human rights where they have been violated; the denunciation of coups in African nations such as Burkina Faso, Guinea and Mali, among others. These are times when the commitment of the movement and its members to social democratic values and global challenges has been reaffirmed and will continue. At the SI World Council to be held in Geneva in just over a month, we will review applications received in recent years from more than 45 parties around the world that want to be part of the SI, a good sign that the daily work of our political forces is recognised and valued at a global level, concluded the Secretary General, who in closing took the opportunity to once again welcome all the delegates and wish for two days of fruitful debate.

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, Dominican Republic), Kattia Rivera (PLN, Costa Rica), Víctor 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.

The delegates from Chile, Marco Antonio Núñez, Claudio Vásquez (PPD) and Ricardo Navarrete (PR), shared with the Committee the progress of the constitutional process underway in the country and the first three months of the government of President Boric, who has sought to broaden its base of support with the SI member parties. The Vice-President of the SI and leader of the New Space Party of Uruguay, Rafael Michelini, shared the steps that the Frente Amplio, today in opposition, has been taking to strengthen its presence in Uruguayan society and to be able to look with renewed confidence at the future elections due to be held in two years. 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. Regarding migration, they pointed out that their country, like others in the area, is not a nation of origin or destination, but fundamentally a nation of transit; distinguishing between these three conditions is relevant for the clarity of the debate, they noted, as well as addressing both regionally and sub-regionally -as Panama does in the PARLACEN- crimes related to migration. Finally, they informed the Committee that the PRD is preparing with great force to obtain the best electoral result in 2024. The delegate of the Dominican PRD, Juan Carlos Guerra, shared with the attendees his reflections on the migratory phenomenon, among which he highlighted the co-responsibility between countries of origin, transit and destination and the phenomenon of growing intra-regional migration since 2010.

The representatives of the two member parties in Haiti, Chantal Ociel (RSD) and Mozart Clerisson (Social Democratic Fusion), expressed that their country continues to be strongly aware of the migratory phenomenon and the degradation of the living conditions of its population. For his part, the leader of the RSD party and Vice-President of the Socialist International, Victor Benoit, in his remarks highlighted Haiti's persistent institutional weakness and the seriousness of the worrying increase in the phenomenon of insecurity and crime: in Haiti, some strongly organised gangs, that are armed and often have an understanding with the authorities, control important territories and operate in strategic locations for the territorial unity of the country. Marcelo García (UCR, Argentina) highlighted that in Argentina living conditions have also deteriorated considerably, despite the fact that during the last two years the country's exports have increased by 45%, however these resources were largely spent by the government on subsidies. The UCR today, as an opposition party, is committed to maintaining a democratic government, with the separation of powers and with the strengthening of the mechanisms of supervision and management control. At the same time, he said, the party around the Alem Foundation is advancing in a process of reflection and reactivation, with a view to recovering Santa Fe's relevance in future regional elections.

The leader of the PLN of Costa Rica and Vice-President of the SI, Kattia Rivera, reflected on four priorities for the social democratic parties of the region: recovering the trust of our peoples

with transparency and accountability; achieving a more efficient and effective State that promotes where appropriate the synergy between the public and the private; promoting an economic reactivation with social equity and a gender approach; working for robust, inclusive educational systems that fulfil their role as an essential tool for human development, promoting, among other things, the consecration of connectivity as an essential human right to close gaps and inequalities; and ensuring environmental respect. The delegates from Venezuela, Mauricio Poler (AD) and Carlos Valero (UNT), recalled that there are more than 6 million Venezuelans who currently live outside their country, so migration represents a major challenge for them. They updated the members on the dollarization of the Venezuelan economy, which in their opinion is far from producing the phenomenon of the beginning of the economic recovery announced by the Nicolás Maduro regime, a very marginal improvement for a nation that has known the destruction of over 75% of GDP. They also highlighted the problems some opposition political parties are going through due to an attempt at official control, in response to which they proposed a declaration by the Committee. Finally, they expressed their confidence that the negotiation process being carried out in Mexico under Norwegian auspices is an initiative to be supported for progress in overcoming the country's crisis.

Miguelina Vecchio (PDT, Brazil), spoke on the issue of democracy, emphasising how it is rapidly deteriorating with the emergence of populist leaderships such as the one that her country is living today with Jair Bolsonaro. She recalled that although the Lula government made great progress in lifting more than 45 million people out of poverty, it was also left with significant debts in matters as important for the country as agrarian reform. She concluded by pointing out that the upcoming presidential elections in her country are being presented in polarised terms between the figures of Bolsonaro and Lula, but that the PDT has confidence in the experience and proposal of Ciro Gomes, their candidate. Miguel Ángel Sánchez (PLC, Colombia) explained to the Committee that with a view to the presidential elections, of which the second round will take place in two weeks, the PLC has decided not to support the candidate Gustavo Petro; he appreciates the Committee's openness to understand this situation and try to learn in depth about the internal politics of the country with the tolerance and respect that characterise democratic socialism.

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.

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.

The Committee reserved a moment between its exchanges and debates to hear from the president of the PLN of Costa Rica and of NE of Uruguay, Kattia Rivera and Rafael Michelini respectively, both vice-presidents of the SI, who expressed words of tribute, admiration and affectionate memory for Bernal Jiménez, a Costa Rican public figure, leader of his PLN party, a very active and beloved vice-president of the SI, who recently passed away. The Committee observed a minute of silence in his memory.

Before concluding the meeting, the Chair of the Committee, Miguel Vargas, and the SI Secretary General, Luis Ayala, reiterated their satisfaction with the participation of the delegates, the quality of the debates and the resolutions agreed upon at the meeting, and expressed their confidence that Latin America and the Caribbean will have a significant presence of parties and an up-to-date and clear position on the main challenges in the region at the SI World Council to be held in Geneva on July 7 and 8, 2022.

Declarations, Meeting of the SI Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean, La Romana, Dominican Republic
3-4 June 2022

Declaration of La Romana

Original: Spanish

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

The Covid19 pandemic which has hit the entire planet since the first months of 2020, presents difficulties and challenges that should guide the social democratic priorities for the region in the construction of a post-pandemic scenario.

With regard to health, the nations of Latin America and the Caribbean must continue advancing in the reform, modernization and strengthening of their health systems. Coordinated efforts between the public and private sectors are needed to ensure access to vaccines and medicines, as well as timely and universal hospital coverage. Likewise, the pandemic has highlighted the need to strengthen the instances of multilateral cooperation and regional coordination to successfully face challenges of this magnitude.

The economic and social consequences of the pandemic have been very harsh for the region, with negative results in terms of employment, poverty and deep inequality. More recently, the conflict in Ukraine has meant a global increase in the price of food, energy and raw materials that has raised the cost of living in our countries and aggravated the crisis that the region is going through.

Democracy and its institutions have been challenged by populist and authoritarian proposals that promote simplistic and insufficient responses with the uncertain promise of quickly recovering a path of security and well-being in our countries. Blaming corruption and delinquency for today's problems has become commonplace in many of our nations and has won favour with the electorate in various recent polls. The Committee considers that these types of political proposals are negative, they often manipulate social discontent using disinformation or directly spreading false news. The social democratic response involves strengthening democracy and maintaining the trust of the people with programmes and public

policies that promote economic recovery, with a hallmark of solidarity, of inclusion and social protection and of environmental justice.

Migration is a phenomenon that has also worsened with the deterioration of economic and political conditions in Latin America and the Caribbean. The Committee underlines its commitment to migration policies that are regulated, orderly, safe and respectful of the human rights of migrants. The Committee recalls that migrants constitute an important factor for development in many of the countries of destination and an important source of economic remittances to their countries of origin. International coordination and addressing the phenomenon with a focus on co-responsibility between nations of origin, transit and final destination are aspects that the Committee considers essential to take into account in the formulation of progressive migration policies.

Finally, the Committee expresses that citizen security today represents another of the great challenges of the social democratic agenda in the region. The increase in crime has a direct relationship, although it is not its only cause, with the increase in poverty and exclusion. The Committee emphasises that the social democratic approach to responding to the population's legitimate demands for security must intelligently and appropriately reconcile preventive measures, such as the creation of job opportunities and the construction of more integrated societies, with efficient and professional methods to combat crime. In this sense, the Committee stressed that modern technologies today constitute a tool that can be decisive for the prevention and punishment of crime. The Committee concludes that the justice systems, the police forces and all the actors involved in matters of public security, must live up to the task incumbent on them to give peace of mind to our peoples within the framework of full respect for the fundamental rights of all.

Declaration on Haiti

Original: Spanish

The SI Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean, at its meeting in La Romana, heard from its member parties in Haiti about recent developments in the situation in that country.

The economic, social and institutional crisis that is afflicting Haiti continues to be of concern to the SI member parties of all the countries in the region.

The Committee reiterates its call to the international community, particularly to multilateral organizations and to the United States, France, Canada, and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), to support Haiti and act as promoters in building a broad consensus among the various social and political actors of the country with a view to its stabilization, security and overcoming of the crisis, in order to enable the social and economic reconstruction that would take Haiti along the path of development.

Declaration on Judicial Independence

Original: Spanish

The SI Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean, at its meeting in La Romana, took note of recent developments in the judicial and administrative processes to which political leaders from different countries in the region have been subjected. The situations of Bolivia and Guatemala, among others, were addressed.

The Committee reiterates its call for the countries of the region to have independent judicial powers that carry out their important functions with full adherence to the guarantees of due process and the fundamental rights of all people.

The Committee condemns any attempt or misuse of judicial powers, with the aim of hindering candidacies, restricting rights or generally threatening the course of political activities in our countries. Likewise, the Committee expresses its solidarity with those who have been sentenced for this type of cause and calls for the review of unjustly imposed sanctions and the cessation of all persecution.

Declaration on Puerto Rico

Original: Spanish

The SI Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean, at its meeting in La Romana, reiterates its historical recognition of Puerto Rico as a Latin American and Caribbean nation, and expresses its solidarity with the repeated resolutions adopted by the Special Committee on Decolonization of the United Nations whereby a call is made to the government of the United States to take the necessary measures so that the people of Puerto Rico can fully exercise their inalienable right to self-determination and independence.

Declaration on Uruguay

Original: Spanish

The SI Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean congratulates the Uruguayan people for resolving their disputes peacefully and highlights the work of the National Commission for the SI (Pink Ballot) for:

1. Achieving almost 800,000 signatures, 30% of the electoral roll, achieved one by one, including "the fingerprint of the right thumb", among other demands in the midst of a pandemic, until reaching the objective of calling for citizen consultation;
2. For the extraordinary vote achieved in the referendum on March 27, very close to achieving victory.

Although the objective of annulling the 135 most negative articles of the Law of Urgent Consideration (LUC) that affected, among other things, the right to strike was not achieved, the popular pronouncement marked the following: 1.- that this type of law is not one you can vote on without a real and deep discussion and even less so in a pandemic; 2.- That there will be no more Laws of Urgent Consideration on more than 40 different themes all together, many of them without any type of urgency, since the attitude of the Uruguayan people, summoned by that citizen movement, does not tolerate it anymore.

It is clear, in view of the Uruguayan experience, that the struggles for principles must be carried out without prejudging the final result.

Declaration on Venezuela

Original: Spanish

The SI Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean, meeting in the Dominican Republic on 3-4 June, 2022,

Considering:

As the Maduro regime has not been able to exercise control over the main Venezuelan opposition political parties, in the course of 2020 it used its Supreme Court of Justice (TSJ) to issue sentences whereby it imposed on three of the largest political parties of the opposition, that is AD, PJ and VP, political leaderships made up of former militants of those organizations to whom they handed over the representation, symbols and headquarters of the said parties. In the specific case of the AD party, they handed over control to a former member of the party, who is today at the full service of the Venezuelan regime.

This situation was denounced by the SI on July 8, 2020, declaring its rejection and condemnation of these new actions by Maduro to eliminate opposition political parties.

Resolves:

FIRSTLY: To disregard the illegitimate authorities imposed by the Venezuelan regime on the Democratic Action (AD), Justice First (PJ) and Popular Will (VP) political parties, as well as to disregard the electoral events that they may carry out.

SECONDLY: To ask the member parties of the Socialist International not to recognize these spurious representatives of AD, PJ and VP in the service of the regime, who are making representations to various international organizations and political parties with the aim of being recognised as the legitimate authorities of the parties fraudulently acquired.



**SI SG present in Maputo,
Mozambique for 60th anniversary of
Frelimo**

25 June 2022

His Excellency President
Filipe Nyusi of
Mozambique receives the
Secretary General of the
Socialist International, Luis
Ayala

Meeting of the SI Council in Geneva

Our commitment to humanitarian and sustainable solutions to global challenges

7-8 July 2022



The Council of the Socialist International met on 7-8 July 2022 at the Palais des Nations, United Nations Office at Geneva, bringing together member parties and guests from around the world for exchanges on an agenda comprising of the challenges and major issues at the heart of the ongoing work of the organisation. The agenda was made up of three main themes, “Working for peace and international security based on common goals, shared principles and rules”, “Strengthening democracy and ensuring fundamental rights” and “Addressing global crises – the pandemic, climate change, the economy, migration and refugees”.

Opening remarks were given by the Secretary General of the SI, Luis Ayala, who expressed his satisfaction that the global membership of the SI could once more meet in person after some challenging years. He underlined the continued engagement of the SI on major issues such as the promotion and defence of democracy, and working for a world in peace. Despite the pandemic, the SI had remained active and engaged, mobilising democratic forces in different regions of the world and continuing to be a voice for peace. He reflected that it was a moment in history with a great number of global crises such as the climate crisis, pandemic recovery, and food and refugee crises, that more than ever required the multilateral approach in order to address global challenges in an interdependent world.

Welcoming delegates to the Palais des Nations, Tatyana Valoyava, Director-General of UNOG, expressed her hope that the setting of the meeting would inspire participants to work towards the goal of a more multilateral world shared by the UN. She considered that it was particularly important given the ongoing peace and security crisis, naming the devastating immediate and long term crisis for Ukraine and the world as part of a dangerous retreat from multilateralism.

Pedro Sánchez, SI Vice-President and President of the Government of Spain, expressed his pride at being a member of the social democratic family and his determination and that of the

Spanish government to fight for socialist policies, proving that progressive ideas and actions were not only needed but more efficient. He called for a firm social democratic response to the Russian war, which not only was having devastating impact on Ukraine and its people but risked food security for the entire world. For him social democracy was the only way to preserve the dignity and well-being of people all over the world and it was incumbent on those present to exchange ideas and good practices in order to ensure the continued success of the movement.

SI President George Papandreou cautioned against a back-to-normal approach after the pandemic, noting that the old normal had produced huge concentrations of power in a number of different spheres. Social democrats should use this moment to be agents of change, with the need for a green, democratic and socially just transition greater than ever. The SI had rejected an irrational war in violation of international law and sovereignty and Ukraine and would continue to work for security based on solidarity and equality. The SI was going to move forward and change the world, addressing new challenges in partnership with women's, green, youth and LGBT movements and other sharing common goals.

During exchanges on the first main theme with its focus on peace and international security, the ongoing tragedy of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and all its implications and ramifications was at the forefront of concerns expressed by many delegates. The Council heard first-hand testimony from its member party, the Social Democratic Party of Ukraine, about how a country and a society built up over decades had been destroyed in weeks. Civilians, including members of the party, had been killed en masse, with many suffering brutal torture. Other SI members echoed the calls from Ukraine for urgent international action to save the lives of civilians and prisoners of war. There was particular repugnance at the use of rape by Russian forces as a weapon of war. As well as the direct humanitarian impact upon Ukraine, the Council heard of the great concern at the possibility that a protracted conflict could lead to catastrophic food shortages that could bring about malnourishment, famine and poverty,

Contributions were also made on other active conflicts in the world, where the Socialist International continues to be engaged and those present were clear that the international community and those working in favour of peace must not lose focus on unresolved hostilities that are affecting millions of people around the world. These include, but are not limited to, the situations in the Middle East, Yemen, Syria, Cameroon, the Sahel region and DR Congo.

The challenges that democracy and democratic parties continue to face in far too many countries around the world were underlined by the diverse contributions on strengthening democracy and ensuring fundamental rights from representatives of all regions of the world. The impact on a human level of the authoritarian practices employed by non-democratic regimes was made tangible through the interventions from representatives of SI member parties in Belarus and Kyrgyzstan highlighting the plight of Mikalai Statkevich and Almazbek Atambayev, who are imprisoned in difficult conditions in their respective countries and have been denied fundamental rights that should exist for all in a democracy.

Concern was expressed at the democratic regression in several countries in Africa, which has seen multiple coups and coup attempts in recent years. This gave an opportunity for representatives of the SI member parties in that continent to share their experiences in relation to democracy in the continent as a whole and within its regions, with the aim of hitting common paths forward by which a united movement of democratic actors can positively impact the struggle for this fundamental right across the continent.

On the third main theme of the Council, wide-ranging contributions were heard on the multiple crises the world is currently facing in relation to the pandemic, climate change, the economy, migration and refugees. As the first Council meeting to be held since the outbreak of the pandemic, it was an opportunity to share experiences of the difficult months and years living with the virus and its consequences, and to reaffirm the need for a social-democratic approach to rebuilding societies and safeguarding populations.

There was a clear sense among those who addressed the Council that these global crises are interlinked, and require common approaches and solutions. Social democracy has historically made great contributions when it comes to offering responses to climate change and economic injustice, challenges that can only be met through internationalism and multilateralism. Those present at the Council were determined to continue within the framework of the SI to develop and advance policies that will address the obstacles faced in every country with solidarity and fairness.

Faced with these enormous global challenges, there was a strong sense among those present at the Council of the need to convene for an SI Congress, the holding of which had already been delayed as a result of the global impact of the coronavirus. The Congress would be an occasion to define the course of the organisation over coming years, and the Council unanimously agreed to accept an offer from the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party, PSOE, to host the XXVI SI Congress in Spain in the last week of November.

Following a report on the work of the Ethics Committee, the Council approved the proposal to admit the Democratic Left party (ID) of Ecuador as a full member.

The Council adopted a number of declarations reflecting the themes of the meeting and some of the discussions over the course of the two days, as well as drawing attention to some specific situations affecting member parties.

Declarations and Resolutions, Meeting of the SI Council in Geneva 7-8 July 2022

Declaration on the need to strengthen our democracies, fight against reactionary populism and the search for peace

Original: Spanish

The Socialist International expresses its concern about the threats that surround democracy in the world and expresses its commitment to being a platform for building peace and democracy.

Humanity is currently facing the effects of the 3 Cs (COVID, climate change and conflicts), with their corresponding impact on democracies.

Democracy and peace form an inseparable pair. War and conflicts put democracies at serious risk and fuel global challenges such as reactionary populism, the decline in respect for the women's rights, the food crisis or the forced migration of victims of armed conflicts, and persecution or mass violations of human rights.

We are now experiencing it acutely with the war in Ukraine, in which civilians are always the main victims of the conflict and the SI reiterates its wholehearted condemnation of the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

We live in a time when reactionary populism, based on discourses that appeal to emotions and feelings, seeks a false empathy and a quick acceptance of simple, and mostly unrealistic,

responses to complex issues, making democratic processes and institutions the central focus of their criticisms.

Under cover of these reactionary populisms, setbacks are taking place in regard to rights that we thought were consolidated. Thus, we are seeing how the full exercise of human rights by women is threatened, including, among others, their sexual and reproductive rights and the right to live a life free of violence, to which we are firmly committed. It is profoundly condemnable that rape continues to be a weapon that aggressors frequently use.

In armed and political conflicts, in the lack of life opportunities, as well as in the climate emergency and the economic and social crises, we find the roots of the flight effect that moves millions of people in the world to migrate. Migrations are inherent in the history of humanity and civilizations. We are the result of innumerable migratory processes. The challenges posed by migratory movements must be addressed from a global perspective, requiring coordinated responses sustained in respect for human rights. We are concerned about the increase in the population of refugee and displaced persons in the world, as well as the use of migrants as a form of pressure against other sovereign states.

It is necessary to advance in the implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration signed in 2018.

Another issue to which we draw attention is the food crisis that threatens the international community as a whole. The growth in food prices and the input necessary for their production are a challenge for the right to life, but also for democracies and for the social and political stability of countries.

Enough food is produced in the world to feed the entire world population. However, the concentration of production in a small number of products and producers hinders the sustainability of agro-food systems and, as a consequence, global food security.

We call for the coordination of the initiatives launched in different areas, emphasising our support for the work of the United Nations to guarantee food security and the right to food for all people.

The growing inequality between countries and within those countries with non-redistributive policies is also a threat to democracy.

In this context, social democratic policies that combine economic growth with advances in rights and equal opportunities as a pillar for the construction of prosperous and supportive societies are presented as the best alternative to protect democracy and peace.

It is not a trivial matter to note that social democratic governments are on the rise. The COVID-19 pandemic and its effects have confirmed that only with public policies that strengthen the welfare state can the crisis be overcome in a resolute manner, leaving no one behind.

We defend social democracy with solidarity, the fraternity between the socialist family that works together so that no one is left behind, promoting inclusive, egalitarian development, concerned about the environment, and rooted in an international rules-based order.

The Council of the Socialist International sees the need to reaffirm the defense of the values of peace and democracy at the center of our collective political action, consolidating the SI as a place for expanding rights and dialogue for the strengthening of democratic institutions and good governance.

Declaration on the Covid-19 pandemic and health professionals

Original: Portuguese

The Council of the Socialist International, meeting on 7-8 July 2022 in Geneva, expresses its solidarity and appreciation to health professionals, men and women who during the Covid-19 pandemic made immeasurable efforts to save lives.

The Council recalls that health professionals occupied the front line in the fight against Covid-19. At the peak of the disease, these professionals faced strenuous working conditions and often had to make great efforts to cover the absence of colleagues, many of whom lost their lives to the disease. The Council stresses that women were overrepresented in front line health and care positions and worked with courage and dedication to save the lives of men and women.

It recognises that to avoid spreading the disease, they had to stay away from friends and family. In this bleak environment, health workers in many countries, like so many other workers, have had to face the financial consequences of the economic mismanagement of the pandemic.

It reiterates that this situation only highlights their willpower and courage, as well as their vocation to take care of people. The selflessness and commitment of these professionals saved countless lives.

It expresses that this effort has shown the great regard and solidarity of healthcare professionals with the sick and affected by Covid-19, especially with their friends and family.

It appeals to governments in favour of vaccination, because in many countries denialism has contributed to delaying and hampering vaccination, as occurred in Brazil.

It reiterates its solidarity and its commitment to the concrete struggle to improve the working and living conditions of health professionals.

Declaration on Bolivia

Original: Spanish

The Council of the Socialist International, meeting in Geneva on 7 – 8 July, 2022, expresses its concern about the situation affecting the former president of Bolivia, Jeanine Áñez, who remains in prison in her country for a trial in which dispositions established by the Bolivian constitution have been ignored.

The Council recalls and endorses the declaration on Judicial Independence adopted by the SI Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean a little over a month ago and makes a new call for the independence of the judiciary and the full restoration of the rule of law in Bolivia.

Resolution on Djibouti

Original: French

The Socialist International notes that violations of human rights and the basic rules of democracy continue in the Republic of Djibouti under President Ismail Omar Guelleh, who is in his 5th consecutive term. The Movement for Democratic Renewal and Development (MRD), a member party of the SI, remains a key target of these heinous attacks. Thus, the Djiboutian authorities have still not implemented the ruling in favour of the MRD that the United Nations Human Rights Committee rendered on November 4, 2020 and published on January 8, 2021,

which provides in particular for the cancellation, within 180 days starting from the ruling release, of the presidential decree which had arbitrarily banned the MRD on 9 July 2008.

The SI once again condemns all the above-mentioned violations. These must come to an end. It demands the implementation of the UN Committee ruling on the dissolution of the MRD. It also calls for the implementation of the democratic reforms included in the political agreement signed between the Opposition and the Government on 30 December 2014, such as the creation of a genuine Joint Independent Electoral National Commission and an authentic legal Opposition status.

Resolution on Haiti

Original: French

The Council of the Socialist International meeting in Geneva at the Palais des Nations, on 7-8 July 2022,

1. Expresses its serious concern at the steady deterioration of the global situation in Haiti one year after the despicable assassination of President Jovenel Moïse;
2. Condemns the banditry developing in Haiti, which constitutes a flagrant violation of the fundamental human rights of the Haitian people;
3. Encourages all Haitian progressives, in particular its member parties, to work towards the adoption of a national political consensus, a necessary condition to get Haiti out of the crisis and return to the democratisation process in the country.
4. Reiterates its appeal to the international community, particularly to multilateral organisations, to support Haiti and make the process of its stabilisation, security and overcoming of the crisis more viable, in order to enable social and economic reconstruction.

Declaration on the Kurdish situation

Kurdistan in Iraq

The Council of the Socialist International recognises that the Middle East is going through a critical juncture. National chauvinism, terrorism, lack of civil governance and bad economic conditions have engulfed the region with instability.

The SI recognises the Kurdish issue in the region and the crucial role of the Kurdistan Region (KR) and their military forces (Peshmerga) in defeating Daesh. We recognise efforts by the KR to deal with a range of problems, with courage and sincerity. The main principles of the SI, such as human rights, freedom, solidarity, justice and peace must continue to be fought for in Iraq and the Middle East. Within the framework of these principles, Iraq and the Middle East region can have a peaceful and stable future.

The Council supports the reactivation of the SI Committee on the Kurdish Question, and the holding of a meeting in the Kurdistan region of Iraq to focus on the Kurdish case and creating harmony among the Kurdish members of the SI.

Kurdistan in Iran

We support the Iranian people's protest and civil movement against the Islamic republic, and especially the Kurdish people's movement for their rights. We believe that the best way to overcome the continuous threats from the Islamic republic to the security and stability of the region is to support the civil movements of people to attain their human and democratic rights

and establish a regime which on a domestic level is democratic and legitimized by the multi ethnic people of Iran, and on the international level a government which is committed to international law and a trusted partner for the international community.

Declaration on Kyrgyzstan

The Socialist International reiterates its concern at the grave situation of former president of Kyrgyzstan Almazbek Atambayev, former leader of SI member the Social Democratic Party of Kyrgyzstan, SDPK, who has been imprisoned in his home country for over 1000 days, and is at this moment in need of urgent medical treatment.

Our organisation has witnessed the startling decline in health of Atambayev, who was visited in his prison cell in April by the SI secretary general. Following calls made by our organisation, some medical diagnosis and care was facilitated for Atambayev by the government of Kyrgyzstan, which was a welcome development and an important step. These examinations confirmed that he is in need of life-saving medical treatment, as his health continues to deteriorate, exacerbated by his incarceration and the conditions in which he is being held. Despite his ongoing need for treatment, the former president is no longer hospitalised, but has been returned to prison and requests for access to the two operations he urgently needs have so far been denied.

The Council therefore calls on the government of Kyrgyzstan to urgently grant the request made for Almazbek Atambayev to be permitted to leave the country in order to receive the two operations he needs, that cannot be performed in Kyrgyzstan.

The Council further underlines that the manner in which the former president has been detained, tried and sentenced contravenes his legal and human rights as a defendant, violates the Kyrgyz Code of Criminal Procedure and breaches international judicial norms.

Declaration on the South Caucasus

In regard to the South Caucasus, the SI Council expresses its deep concern over some post-2020 developments, including incursions on the borders of the Republic of Armenia, as well as the continuation of holding Armenian POWs and detained civilians. Furthermore, the Council urges the Armenian authorities to refrain from the anti-democratic path they have chosen especially after losing the 2020 war, by persecuting the “Resistance Movement” and other opposition activists, by pressuring the legal system aiming to increase their influence on courts and by limiting open and transparent public accountability.

Resolution on Tunisia

Original: French

The Socialist International is closely following the development of the situation in Tunisia, the country where the Arab revolutions started and the only one that has succeeded in a peaceful democratic transition, hailed by all democratic countries.

A new draft Constitution will be submitted to referendum on 25 July 2022 without it being the subject of an inclusive consultation with the active forces of the country. The project constitutes a real step backwards compared to the 2014 Constitution hailed for having established freedoms and human rights in its overall concept, a political system based on the

separation of powers and a balance between them, with independent institutions to control executive power.

The SI therefore calls on the Tunisian authorities to resume the democratic process in an inclusive manner.



SI denounces executions in Myanmar

26 July 2022

The Socialist International unequivocally condemns the execution of four pro-democracy activists by the military junta in Myanmar.

Kyaw Min Yu, known as Ko Jimmy, a veteran activist of the pro-democracy movement who had regularly been jailed for protesting against the regime since the 1998 student uprisings; Phyo Zeya Thaw, well-known for bringing hip-hop music to the country, who had joined the National League for Democracy and worked closely with its leader Aung San Suu Kyi; as well as Hla Myo Aung and Aung Thura, were all charged with alleged terrorism offences for which they were executed.

The use of the death penalty is abhorrent and can never be accepted. In this case, the use of capital punishment represents the brutal and systematic aggression of a murderous regime. The death penalty has not been carried out since the late 1980s in Myanmar and this act is a deeply distressing step in the military junta's crackdown on those seeking democracy, freedom and human rights. The military in Myanmar have judged civilians in closed trials since they declared Martial Law in March 2021. The Socialist International remains deeply concerned for the lives and welfare of the 117 prisoners that are now reported to be on death row since the coup took place in February 2021, which includes 2 children. The UN reports that more than 30 percent of over 2,100 people killed since February 2021 have died in military custody.

The Socialist International has frequently spoken out against the ongoing repression in Myanmar, and now calls again, urgently, for the international community to condemn, and hold

to account, the military junta for perpetrating these crimes. The SI calls for the immediate release of all political prisoners in Myanmar and the protection of the fundamental human rights of all those seeking peace and democracy in the country. Today it is urgent to put an end to the aggression and killings, respect human lives and open a path towards a just democratic system of governance.

The SI further urges the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to take strong action, especially in light of its Five-Point consensus peace plan which has now been violated by these executions.

The Socialist International has maintained a longstanding campaign against the death penalty and will not cease to call for its total abolishment worldwide.

Referendum in Tunisia

27 July 2022

The results of the referendum in Tunisia announced yesterday came as no surprise, following the exceptionally low turnout to vote and the steps previously taken by the regime to undermine the parliament and to concentrate power in the hands of the president.

The Socialist International recalls the Resolution on Tunisia adopted by the SI Council at its recent meeting in Geneva, and reaffirms its solidarity with its member party in that country, ETTAKATOL, and with the Tunisian people who continue to struggle for their democratic rights.

Resolution of the SI Council at its meeting in Geneva on 7-8 July 2022:

The Socialist International is closely following the development of the situation in Tunisia, the country where the Arab revolutions started and the only one that has succeeded in a peaceful democratic transition, hailed by all democratic countries.

A new draft Constitution will be submitted to referendum on 25 July 2022 without it being the subject of an inclusive consultation with the active forces of the country. The project constitutes a real step backwards compared to the 2014 Constitution hailed for having established freedoms and human rights in its overall concept, a political system based on the separation of powers and a balance between them, with independent institutions to control executive power.

The SI therefore calls on the Tunisian authorities to resume the democratic process in an inclusive manner.

SI Statement on Nicaragua

12 August 2022

Original: Spanish

The Socialist International is deeply concerned by the intimidation and attacks on the Catholic Church, its authorities and places of worship, reported in recent weeks in Nicaragua.

The Bishop of Matagalpa, Rolando Álvarez, who remains under house arrest with other religious leaders and parishioners by special forces in his diocese in the north of the country, has become, as have many others, one of the visible faces of an unacceptable persecution with ahistorical overtones. The Bishops' Conferences of countries in the region and the Episcopal

Council of Latin America and the Caribbean (CELAM) have also expressed their concern about these developments and their solidarity with the victims.

These are not, however, isolated acts. The harassment of religious people has been constant since the Nicaraguan Bishops' Conference played the role of mediator and criticised the conduct of the Ortega-Murillo pair during the mass protests of 2018, which were violently suppressed and left a toll of hundreds of dead and wounded. In March 2022, the apostolic nuncio Waldemar Stanislaw Sommertag was expelled from the country, followed by the Sisters of Mother Teresa of Calcutta in July, and prior to that, in 2019, Bishop Silvio Báez was forced into exile.

Daniel Ortega shows once again his absolute and unambiguous disregard for democracy. This time, his persecution targets the Catholic Church, but it previously targeted the cultural sector, the media and a wide variety of civil society organisations, including the century-old Nicaraguan Academy of Language.

The Socialist International reiterates its condemnation of this new attempt to silence and suppress any voice contrary to the Sandinista regime, which seems no longer satisfied with its absolute and illegitimate control over all the powers of the State. Every day, the human rights of the Nicaraguan people are ignored, undermined, and violated. The SI has been and will remain involved in the restoration of democracy in Nicaragua, and works for the respect for the fundamental rights of its people.



Victory for Angola

The Socialist International celebrates the success of President João Lourenço who was re-elected in Angola's recent presidential elections, heralding a great victory for the Angolan people and the future of the country.

The SI was pleased to join the President and the MPLA in Luanda for the elections, along with other international observers including representatives from the African Union, former heads of state and government, and many others from political parties and organisations worldwide.

During proceedings, SI Secretary General Luis Ayala noted the efficiency and transparency of the electoral process, which underscores the effective democratic advancements

that have been made in Angola under the leadership of President Lourenço and the MPLA.

The election results undoubtedly emphasise the strong will of the Angolan people to continue the path of social democracy, human rights and freedoms, and the SI warmly congratulates President João Lourenço, members of the MPLA, and all the Angolan people on their victory and success.

Press conference with SI Secretary General Luis Ayala



SI calls for urgent international response to flooding in Pakistan

14 September 2022

The Socialist International is deeply moved by the plight of the people of Pakistan in face of the unprecedented flooding that is currently devastating the country. The record-breaking monsoons have already affected an estimated 33 million people and resulted in more than 1300 deaths. The thoughts and solidarity of our global movement are with Pakistan, and we call on the international community to fully mobilise in support of the people of Pakistan in this desperate moment.

There is without question a pressing need to provide urgent aid and assistance to Pakistan and its people in face of this devastation and the immediate threat to lives and livelihoods. The damage to date has been estimated by Pakistan at \$30 billion, and may yet rise significantly. The international community must spare no effort to deliver the help that Pakistan needs and requests at this time. As the UN Secretary General has remarked, the massive financial, logistical and humanitarian support needed by Pakistan is not a matter of generosity, rather it is a question of climate justice.

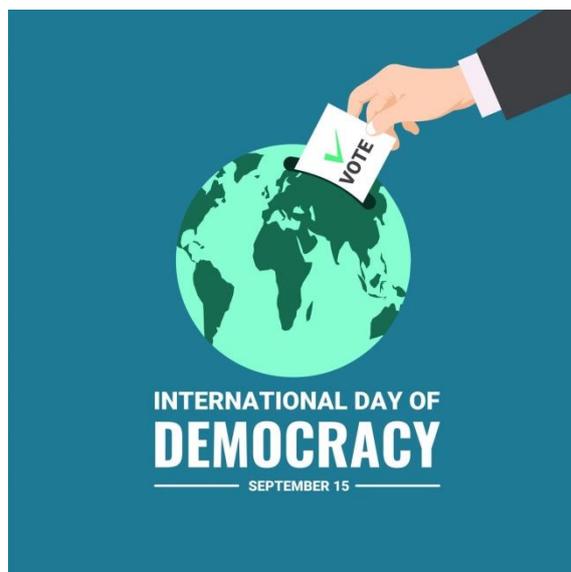
The challenges in order to deliver vital assistance to those in most need are immense. Severe damage to infrastructure has been hampering aid and rescue operations with a great many roads and bridges having collapsed or flooded. A shortage of clean water means that many children are at risk of dying from disease. A further consequence of the flooding is that the agricultural belt of the country has been submerged, devastating key crops including cotton, wheat and rice. This is likely to have a catastrophic impact on the ability of Pakistan to feed itself and will have wider repercussions, as Pakistan is one of the world's top exporters of cotton and rice.

The flooding has left approximately one third of the country underwater, making this disaster unlike any previously seen in Pakistan. There is clear and incontrovertible evidence linking climate change to the intensity of the monsoon that has caused so much devastation. Due to global warming, air and sea temperatures have risen, which leads to more evaporation. This warmer air holds more moisture, making the monsoon rainfall even more intense. In the case of Pakistan, this is compounded by the melting of glacial ice in the north of the country creating thousands of glacial lakes which are risk of sudden outbursts, overwhelming weak flood defences and low-quality housing and infrastructure.

The floods are the latest example of a climate induced natural disaster, about which climate scientists long have warned, and which have become more frequent in recent years. Though Pakistan is responsible for only a tiny fraction of historical emissions in the world, it is extremely vulnerable to climate change due to its geography. This is a familiar pattern for many countries in the developing world, which are at severe risk and are likely to suffer more heavily than those countries with the greatest responsibility for historical emissions. The tragedy unfolding in Pakistan is a stark reminder that climate change is already causing severe loss of life, and must serve as a catalyst for renewed efforts in all countries to reduce emissions. It is particularly incumbent on the richest countries with the highest cumulative emissions, to meet and exceed the targets laid out in the Paris Agreement and Glasgow Climate Pact in order that the global temperature rise can be limited to 1.5 degrees.

SI marks the UN International Day of Democracy

15 September 2022



SI concerned by border clashes between Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan

18 September 2022

The Socialist International is greatly concerned by the recent fighting on the border between Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, which has resulted in the deaths of at least 50 people, many of them civilians. These clashes come in the context of a longstanding border dispute between the two countries that has persisted since the breakup of the Soviet Union. The ceasefire that has been in place since Saturday 17 September must be maintained and it is imperative that both parties take urgent measures to deescalate the situation and open the way for a diplomatic resolution, without which an already dangerous and entrenched dispute will continue to destroy lives and livelihoods.

The SI condemns the reported attacks on villages and settlements that have claimed dozens of innocent lives. The prolongation of hostilities and violence ultimately benefits neither party and has devastating repercussions for civilians on both sides living in the border area, many tens of thousands of whom have been displaced by the fighting in recent days. It is a fundamental belief of the SI that diplomacy is the only way to bring such long standing disputes to an end, and it wholeheartedly supports the calls made in recent days by the Social Democrats, SI member party in Kyrgyzstan, for a ceasefire, withdrawal of all troops and negotiations for a peaceful settlement of the situation. The global social democratic family is in full solidarity with its members and other voices for peace in the region advocating for a diplomatic approach.

In order to achieve lasting peace, a durable resolution to the question of the border between Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan is required, a task that is particularly challenging as much of the 1000-kilometre-long boundary currently has no official demarcation, with many enclaves and Kyrgyz and Tajik villages side by side. Previous violent clashes have been triggered by disagreements over access to water resources, and even with fully demarcated borders, there is no doubt that great efforts will be required to ensure that the two populations can coexist. The Socialist International calls on the international community to assist the Kyrgyz and Tajik governments in reaching a negotiated solution and is ready to engage in conjunction with its member parties in the region in order to promote and advance efforts for peace.

Meeting of the SI Presidium in New York

22 September 2022



Following a pause of two years due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Presidium of the Socialist International convened in New York on 22 September 2022, continuing its tradition of meeting during the high-level segment of the UN General Assembly. As well as offering the opportunity for exchanges on issues of concern on the global agenda and those being addressed at this year's General Assembly, the meeting dealt with matters of particular national and international concern to members, and the forthcoming XXVI SI Congress to be held in Madrid in November.

Opening the meeting, SI President George Papandreou stressed that social democratic forces at the global level had a great responsibility to unite in response to global challenges, at a crucial time with great geopolitical tensions. The focus of the organisation needed to be on proposals for social solidarity, multilateralism and international cooperation, and maintaining peace. He highlighted the importance of the coming Congress as a moment for empowering the organisation for the times ahead.

SI Vice-President and President of the Government of Spain, Pedro Sánchez, highlighted that it was important, in the face of global challenges, to renew faith in the ideology of the Socialist International, and its shared values and principles, vindicating the history of the movement and underlining the relevance and strength that social democratic parties and policies have to offer the world. He announced to the Presidium that he had decided to present himself as a candidate for the SI presidency at the Congress, and received the unequivocal support of his fellow presidium members.

The role of the SI as a platform for progressive forces on a global level was underlined by Antonio Costa, Prime Minister of Portugal. He pointed to the constant presence of the fight for democracy, freedom, human rights and peace in the history and activities of the organisation, a legacy that continues to the present day.

The SI Secretary General Luis Ayala joined in the expressions of satisfaction at once more bringing together the leadership of the SI in New York, though circumstances and logistical

difficulties had unfortunately prevented the participation of a number of vice-presidents and heads of state and government who sent their greetings. He added his voice to those who believed that the social democratic family, with a common approach, could provide the answers to global challenges and his conviction that the Madrid Congress was a timely forum in which to address these vital issues.

The vice-presidents participating in the meeting held exchanges on the priorities of the SI both in relation to the current global situation and with regard to the forthcoming Congress. They reflected on the historic role of socialism and the continued necessity for the common principles of democratic socialism in order to face global challenges. These include the preservation and advancement of democracy and civil and political rights, and moving forward in line with the Global Goals that reflect so much of what social democracy stands for today.

Despite successes achieved and progress made, there was a recognition of worrying developments both on a global and regional level that require the vigilance and action of the world social democratic movement. Coups d'état in Mali, Guinea and Burkina Faso reversed some of the democratic progress made in Africa, and serious challenges continue in the Sahel region in terms of religious extremism, Islamic terrorism and international trafficking of arms and people. Increased tension with the potential for conflict in the South Caucasus and Central Asia was highlighted, in particular with regard to the Republics of Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan where extra-state military forces were involved, as well as the recent tensions and conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia. Along with these, the devastating impact of the war in Ukraine was also reflected on and the meeting received a report on the ongoing crisis in Haiti.

Approaches on these issues needed to be incorporated into existing strategies related to the fight against climate change and work on the migratory and food emergencies, with interdependent crises requiring coordinated action at a global level. Worries were expressed about disillusionment among citizens, and the need to address their concerns and other potential causes of recent electoral setbacks for globalist and social democratic ideals, while reactionary and radical forces had advanced.

Looking ahead to the Madrid Congress, multiple interventions were made in support of a strategy to maintain and expand the capacity, influence and relevance of the Socialist International, encompassing reforms for equal gender representation and ensuring the financing of the organisation while maintaining broad participation. The chairs of the regional committees for Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean who were present at the meeting both conveyed the wish of their respective member parties that at the next Congress Luis Ayala continue as Secretary General, underlining his knowledge of the organisation and their confidence in him. They highlighted the benefits of the formula of both change and continuity to face the important challenges ahead. Vice-presidents also identified opportunities presented by embracing new technologies and increasing the digital reach of the organisation and developing partnerships with other progressive forces and civil society.

The optimism and anticipation felt at the imminent meeting of the Congress, preceded by meetings of the Presidium, committees and Council was a reflection of the eagerness of all Presidium members to engage with the challenges for the organisation.

The members of the SI Presidium that participated in the meeting were George Papandreou, SI President; Luis Ayala, SI Secretary General; SI Vice-Presidents Pedro Sánchez (President of the government of Spain), Isabel Allende (Chile), Pia Locatelli (Italy), Rafael Michelini (Uruguay), Mario Nalpatian (Armenia), Kattia Rivera (Costa Rica), Jesús Rodríguez (Argentina), Bokary Treta (Mali, also Chair of the SI Africa Committee), Miguel Vargas (Dominican Republic, also Chair of the SI Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean); and Ouafa Hajji (President of SIW). The Presidium was joined by the Prime Minister of Portugal António Costa, the Minister-

President of Wallonia, Elio di Rupo (Belgium), the President of IUSY, Jesús Tapia, and the President of the PS of Chile, Paulina Vodanovic.

Socialist International condemns abuse of authority and human rights violations in Iran

24 September 2022

The Socialist International strongly condemns grave violations of human rights, repression and violence by the Islamic regime in Iran, as citizens have taken to the streets across the nation to protest against brutal treatment and abuses of power by the authorities.

People across the world have been shocked and appalled by the tragic case of Jina (Mahsa) Amini, an innocent Kurdish girl who died while in a coma as a result of injuries sustained during her detention by the Iranian morality police in Tehran. There is clear evidence that Amini was subject to beating and torture by the authorities, while detained for allegedly wearing her hijab in an 'improper' way.

The response to the unlawful killing of Jina Amini was an outpouring of nationwide protest against her brutal treatment and the oppressive restrictions faced on a daily basis by women and girls in Iran. Faced with these legitimate demands, the authoritarian regime has sought to repress and subdue those protesting, with a despicable use of lethal force and live rounds that has resulted in multiple deaths and a large number of injuries.

The SI stands with those who have raised their voices in Iran to call for fundamental change and for those who perpetrated this crime to be brought to justice. It further expresses its deep admiration for the fearless way in which citizens have taken to the streets in Iran, despite the grave risks to their own safety. The power and potential of these protests to bring about change is clear from the response of the Iranian authorities, who have taken the step of shutting off the internet and blocking access to social media platforms through which protesters have been organising. The international community must be vigilant to these efforts to censor online space, with the aim of preventing the world from learning about the violence employed by the Iranian authorities against unarmed protesters.

A fundamental issue at stake in Iran and brought to the fore in recent days is the power of the morality police to detain women for wearing clothing perceived to be improper. No woman should have their choice of clothing dictated to them by the authorities or discriminated against based on how they dress. The repressive nature of the Iranian regime impacts particularly deeply on Kurdish women and girls, who are oppressed both on account of their ethnicity and gender. The SI offers its full support and solidarity to its Kurdish member parties in Iran, who are tirelessly maintaining their struggle for a different future for the people of Eastern Kurdistan, where the principles of democracy and human rights are upheld. The international community must do more to support these repressed communities and hold the Iranian regime accountable for its crimes against its own citizens, including those responsible for the killing of Jina Amini.

The SI mourns the loss of Jina Amini and other innocent victims of brutality of the Iranian authorities during protests in response to her killing. It stands in full solidarity with women and minorities in Iran who are suffering repressive treatment at the hands of the regime. It is high time for the Iranian state to address the legitimate grievances of its citizens, who are suffering under social restrictions, economic stagnation and an unjust and unaccountable theocratic system.



**SI marks the 30th anniversary of
Willy Brandt's death**
8 October 2022

SI Secretary General receives PNP president and party members
8 October 2022



SI Secretary General Luis Ayala was pleased to receive at the SI Secretariat in London Mark Golding, President of the People's National Party of Jamaica, along with a delegation from the party including Julian Robinson, Mikael Philips and Dahlia Walker-Huntington

Meeting of the SI Committee for the Caucasus and the Black Sea

21-22 October 2022



The SI Committee for the Caucasus and Black Sea region met in Astana on 21-22 October 2022, hosted by the Nationwide Social Democratic Party (OSDP), focusing on the key issues on the regional agenda. The meeting opened with a minute of silence in memory of Araz Alizadeh, leader of the SDPA of Azerbaijan and a co-chair of the committee, who passed away a few weeks ago.

Declaration of the Committee



Nation-wide social-democratic party Жалпыұлттық социал-демократиялық партия

010000, Shevchenko str., 10/1, of. 203, Astana city, Kazakhstan, e-mail: osdp.center@gmail.ru

October 22, 2022

Socialist International Secretariat

The Committee of the CIS countries, the Caucasus and the Black Sea on October 21-22 in Astana considered the geopolitical and civilizational situation in the region and in the world, adopted the Resolution, and also stated:

1. The countries of the region found themselves at the epicenter of the most powerful military, geopolitical and civilizational confrontation since the Second World War. Not only all countries of the region are involved in this confrontation, but also countries located far beyond its borders, often against their will. The results of this confrontation will affect not only the future of the region, but also the future of the entire world.

2. The world system has begun a transition comparable to the historical turning point in 1991, and now the collapse of the neoliberal system will have no less devastating consequences than the collapse of the communist system in 1991.
3. This turning point is very important for world social democracy. On the one hand, new opportunities are opening up, on the other hand, we face new threats, and the Socialist International must be ready for them.
4. The Committee made a unanimous decision that Luis Ayala would be a guarantor of stability and the successful overcoming of crises by the Socialist International and unanimously nominated him for Secretary General of the Socialist International for the next period. Also, the Committee hopes that Pedro Sánchez will be able to open up new opportunities and supported his candidacy for the post of President of the SI.

Since its Co-chairmen were absent from the Committee meeting due to the fact that one died and the other is in prison, on behalf of all Committee members who took part in the meeting on October 21-22 in Astana:

1. Armenia – Dashnaktyutyun
2. Azerbaijan – SDPA
3. Belarus - SDPB Narodnaya Hramada
4. Kazakhstan – OSDP
5. Kyrgyzstan – SDK
6. Ukraine – SDPU

***Chairman of the host party OSDP
Askhat Rahimzhanov***

RESOLUTION

Our region has found itself at the epicentre of the most powerful military, geopolitical and civilisational confrontation since the Second World War, the war waged by the Russian Federation against Ukraine. This conflict has drawn in all the countries of the region, as well as those far beyond its borders, often against their will, and it is clear that the result of this war will affect the future of both the region and the entire world.

The war against Ukraine has already acquired the characteristics of genocide. This has included attacks on critical social infrastructure, attacks and bombings of the civilian population, execution of civilians in the occupied territories, torture, ethnic cleansing, sexual and physical violence against civilians and military personnel of all genders and ages, including children under 4 years of age.

All of this is accompanied by threats to use nuclear weapons against a country that voluntarily refused them, and provocative actions at the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant and the Kakhovka hydroelectric power station that could bring about an ecological catastrophe on a global scale. All these crimes must be investigated by a special international tribunal, and all the guilty parties, including those who masterminded, ordered and executed these violations, must be held accountable.

Russia's war against Ukraine is primarily a war of despotism against democratic values and principles. This illegal and unprovoked invasion has seen all true democracies unite in support of Ukraine's freedom. The SI reiterates its full solidarity with the struggle of the Ukrainian

people and calls for the withdrawal of Russian military forces from all Ukrainian territory, respecting the borders of 1991.

The use of suicide drones by Russia in Ukraine against non-military facilities, targeting civilians and social infrastructure is a deeply troubling development and a further violation of international law. The committee appeals to the government of Tajikistan not to allow the construction of plants for the production of Iranian drones, and calls for sanctions against the authoritarian regime in Iran that supplies Russia with these weapons that are used to kill civilians in Ukraine. The committee expresses its full support and solidarity for those demonstrating for democracy and gender equality in Iran.

The committee is in full solidarity with the people of Belarus, who have declared their desire for freedom and democracy and rejected the dictatorial regime of Alexander Lukashenko. It demands the full and unconditional release of Mikalai Stakevich, members of Narodnaya Hramada and all political prisoners. Their fate cannot be subject to bargaining.

Lukashenko is an accomplice of the terrorist regime of Vladimir Putin in Ukraine and cannot represent the will of the Belarusian people. The authoritarian regime is not a guarantor of the independence of Belarus but rather a threat to its sovereignty, and Lukashenko's actions have placed Belarus under de facto occupation. Any negotiations with the regime must result in the release of political prisoners, the withdrawal of Russian troops and the transfer of power to bring an end to the dictatorship.

The committee takes into account the report of the Social Democrats of Kyrgyzstan (SDK) on human rights violations and the restriction of freedom of speech in Kyrgyzstan. It calls on the authorities of that country to release Almazbek Atambaev, Kanykey Aranova, Adilet Baltabay, Yrys Zhekshenaliev and Ruslan Beknazarov, as well as to stop the pressure and unfair trials against political prisoners in the case of the Koi-Tash events, as well as the persecution of Aizhan Myrsaliyeva. It further calls on the authorities of Kyrgyzstan to investigate the provocations against Azattyk, Cactus Media and Kloop.

The committee has heard the special report of the SDK and condemns the military aggression by Tajikistan against Kyrgyzstan. It reiterates the position of the SI that a durable resolution to the question of the border between Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan is required, and that the only way to resolve this border dispute is through diplomacy.

In relation to the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan, the committee underlines the necessity of a stable peace and a permanent end to hostilities. Our organisation has always stated that peace is a prerequisite for a prosperous society which can guarantee the democratic rights and well-being of its citizens. The armed conflict in autumn 2020 was a tragic reminder that there is no military solution to this dispute, with war bringing only greater suffering, more loss of life and further escalation of violence. Adherence to the terms of the 2020 ceasefire agreement is of utmost importance. The Socialist International will continue to be committed to a peaceful path, urging the international community at large to play their part in bringing peace and security to the region.

The remaining questions regarding competing territorial claims must be addressed without further escalation of violence or the threat of force, which do nothing to address the root causes of the conflict. A comprehensive and durable peace agreement is dependent on mutual recognition of internationally recognised borders, the absence of territorial claims and respect for the fundamental rights of the citizens of both states. The parties must commit to refrain from undermining the security of each other, by threats or the use of force in a manner inconsistent with the terms of the UN Charter. Recent military operations and strikes on settlements and civilian infrastructure are not conducive to peace between the countries. The SI calls on both sides to ensure that their troops are withdrawn from the territory of the other

country. Any third-party involvement in the military confrontation is condemnable and must be stopped.

Both governments must abide by international law at all times and the SI condemns torture wherever and whenever it occurs. The committee calls for the return of prisoners of war and detainees as an important step towards peace. The committee expresses its hope that delimitation and demarcation of the border between Armenia and Azerbaijan can lead to the establishment of diplomatic relations between the countries, and the unblocking of transport and other communications. In a state of peace, the possibility also exists for cooperation in fields of mutual interest.

The committee resolves to develop contacts with like-minded socialist and social democratic parties in the region from countries that are not yet represented within the SI.

It will broaden the scope of its future activities, including the organisation and holding of joint events within the framework of the committee to increase visibility and reach in the countries of the region. This could take the form of common forums with youth and women's wings of member parties or the participation of government agencies and experts who share our ambition of advancing and popularising social democracy.

The committee will continue to be a platform for the development of inter-party relations and exchange of experience in party building. Future activities should include the organisation of practical seminars to share the expertise held within the committee, and initiatives with other continents to build on the successes of SI member parties in other regions of the world.

Committee members will remain engaged with efforts to peacefully resolve conflict situations in countries of the region.

Meeting of the SI Africa Committee, Dakar, Senegal

28-29 October 2022



The Africa Committee of the Socialist International convened in Dakar on 28-29 October 2022, under the chairmanship of Bokary Treta, RPM, Mali. The gathering brought together representatives of member parties from across the continent, to discuss an agenda that included the current challenges to democracy and its institutions; the prevention of conflicts,

overcoming crises and securing peace; joint efforts to safeguard and strengthen social democracy in the region; and their contribution to the forthcoming XXVI SI Congress to be held in Madrid in November. The meeting also heard reports from the member parties on the national situation in their respective countries.

Following the discussions, a resolution was adopted and it was agreed to prepare a declaration for presentation at the Congress.

At the conclusion of the meeting, in response to an invitation from the President of the Republic of Senegal, the participants held a meeting with His Excellency, President Macky Sall, at the presidential palace.

Resolution of Dakar

Original : French

The Africa Committee of the Socialist International met in Dakar, hosted by the Socialist Party of Senegal (PS), on 28 and 29 October 2022.

This session of the SI on the African soil of Senegal was an opportunity for the member parties present to discuss the political situation and perspectives in their respective countries, and the resulting economic and social realities.

Moreover, the democratic processes in Africa were reviewed with a focus on the subsequent crises (terrorism, military coups, non-respect of democratic and fundamental rules, the key question of parity in our state institutions, in our Parties and in the SI itself, poverty, the place of African youth, environmental issues, trade on the continent, and the problems of education and health in our public policies).

In this regard, the SI Africa Committee, meeting in Dakar, expressed the wish to prepare a text, under the title of “Dakar Declaration”, in the perspective of a coordinated participation of the African SI member parties, with emphasis on:

- 1- African solutions to the issues facing the continent, building on our remarkable identity as social democrats;
- 2- The situation of democracy seen through the multiple constraints that handicap it;
- 3- The fight for the doctrinal and programmatic re-appropriation of Social Democracy, as the best method of managing world affairs, on the basis of the common values that characterise our identity, such as freedom, equality, social justice, and solidarity;
- 4- African democratic governance, which must come back to the fore, to resolve the justified dissatisfaction of our youth, which is the future of the world, and of African women, a real vector of development, particularly in rural areas.

The “Dakar Declaration” will be finalised, in consultation between the African member parties, in an inclusive manner, to be presented and supported at the Madrid Congress.

SI celebrates Lula's victory

The Socialist International celebrates the victory of Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva who has defeated Jair Bolsonaro in Brazil's presidential elections, bringing new hope not only for the Brazilian people but for millions across the world.



Reuters

In Memoriam



Jalal Talabani
President of Iraq
Founder and Secretary General of the Patriotic
Union of Kurdistan, PUK
SI Honorary Vice-President
1933 – 2017



Salifou Diallo
President of the MPP, Burkina Faso
1957- 2017



Abdul Razzaq Mirza
Also known as Abdul Razzaq al-Feily
Co-founder of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, PUK
1945-2018



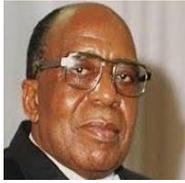
Maria Jonas
Secretary General of the Socialist International
Women 1985-1995
1940-2018



Wim Kok
Former Prime Minister of the Netherlands and
former Vice-President of the Socialist International
1938-2018



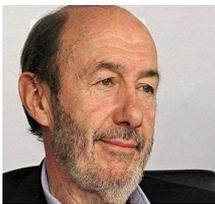
Kofi Annan
Secretary General of the United Nations 1997-2006
1938-2018



Antoine Gizenga
Secretary General of United Lumumbist Party,
PALU former Prime Minister of DR Congo
1925 – 2019



Alan García
Former President of Peru and former leader of the
Peruvian Aprista Party, APRA
SI Honorary President
1949-2019



Alfredo Pérez Rubalcaba
Former leader of the Spanish Socialist Workers'
Party, PSOE
SI Vice-President
1951-2019



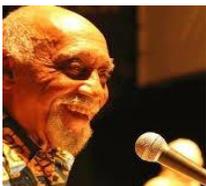
Ousmane Tanor Dieng
Former leader of the Socialist Party of Senegal
SI Vice-President
1947-2019



Dolores Renau
Former President of the Socialist International
Women, Spain
1936 – 2019



Maarit Feldt-Ranta
Former Vice-Chair and Secretary General of the
Social Democratic Party of Finland
1968 – 2019



Marcelino dos Santos
Founding member of Frente de Libertação de
Moçambique, FRELIMO, and former President of
the People's Assembly of Mozambique
1929-2020



Abderrahmane Yousseoufi
Former Prime Minister of Morocco, former First
Secretary of the Socialist Union for Popular Forces,
USFP
SI Vice-President
1924 – 2020



Lugi Gizenga
Former Secretary General of the United Lumumbist
Party, PALU, DR Congo
1965 – 2020



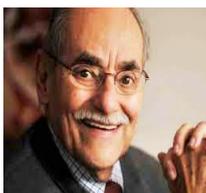
Pentti Väänänen
Socialist International Secretary General 1983-
1989, Finland
1945 – 2020



John Hume
Founding member and former leader of the Social
democratic and Labour Party, SDLP
Key architect of the Northern Ireland peace
process, Nobel Peace Prize winner
1937 – 2020



Jan Sithole
Former Member of Parliament for Manzini North,
Eswatini, and President of the Swaziland
Democratic Party, SWADEPA
1953 – 2020



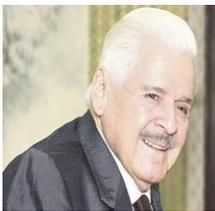
Horacio Serpa
Former leader of the Liberal Party of Colombia
SI Vice-President and SI Honorary President
1943 – 2020



Saeb Erekat
International peace negotiator for Palestine,
Secretary of the Executive Committee of the
Palestine Liberation Organization, member of the
Fatah Central Committee
1955 – 2020



Serge Gilles
Founder of the Union of Haitian Social Democrats,
Fusion
1936 – 2021



Bernal Jiménez Monge
Former President of the National Liberation Party,
PLN, Costa Rica
SI Vice-President
1930-2021



Vassos Lyssarides
Founder of the Movement of Social Democrats,
EDEK, Cyprus
1920-1921



Jorge Sampaio
Former President of Portugal and former Secretary
General of the Socialist Party, PS, Portugal
1939 – 2021



Fofi Gennimata
Former leader of the Movement for Change, KINAL,
and the Greek Panhellenic Socialist Movement,
PASOK
1964 – 2021



Ibrahim Boubacar Keita

Former President of Mali, former Prime Minister, a former leader of Rally for Mali, RPM, a former leader of the Alliance for Democracy in Mali, ADEMA-PASJ
SI Vice-President
1945 – 2022



Wenceslao Mansogo Alo

Member of the leadership of the Convergence for Social Democracy, CPDS, Equatorial Guinea
1955-2022



José Eduardo dos Santos

Former President of Angola and former leader of the MPLA
1942-2022



Mikhail Gorbachev

Former President of the Soviet Union
1931-2022



Araz Alizadeh

Founder and leader of the Social Democratic Party of Azerbaijan, SDPA
co-Chair of the SI Committee for the Caucasus and Black Sea Region
1951-2022

ACTIVITIES OF THE SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL

*From the Congress in Cartagena in March 2017 to the Congress in Madrid
in November 2022*

2017

MARCH

The last vestiges of democracy have fallen in Venezuela

APRIL

Democracy can only be protected and advanced when in full view of the people and its institutions

SI at the 136th IPU Assembly in Dhaka, Bangladesh

SI condemns the latest abduction and detention of Mikalai Statkevich

MAY

SI Secretary General forced out of the DRC by Kabila regime

Standing with Manchester

JUNE

SI condemns sentencing of opposition MP Enis Berberoğlu

JULY

SI Council meeting at the United Nations in New York

Venezuelan government deepens break with democracy and increases repression and violence

AUGUST

It is time to enforce the Democratic Charter in Venezuela

Participation at the Congress of the PRI, Mexico

Observation of the presidential and parliamentary elections in Angola

In memoriam for Salifou Diallo, Burkina Faso

SEPTEMBER

SI call to protect the Rohingya people in Myanmar

Participation in the Congress of ETTAKATOL, Tunisia

Meeting of the SI Presidium and Heads of State and Government at the United Nations in New York during the High Level Segment of the General Assembly

Attendance at the inauguration of the new President of Angola, HE João Lourenço

Participation in the Congress of Frelimo, Mozambique

OCTOBER

In memoriam for Jalal Talabani, Iraq

Attendance at the State funeral ceremony in honour of Jalal Talabani in Baghdad

Meeting with HE the President of Iraq, Fuad Masum

Participation in the 137th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union in St Petersburg

Meeting of parliamentarians from SI member parties at the IPU Assembly in St. Petersburg

NOVEMBER

The Socialist International on the centenary of the Balfour Declaration
Meeting of the SI Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean in the Dominican Republic
Presidential and parliamentary elections in Chile
Meeting of the SI Council in Barcelona, Spain
Election observation: 1st round of the Presidential and parliamentary elections in Chile

DECEMBER

The unilateral decision on Jerusalem by the United States of America
Meeting of the SI Africa Committee in Luanda, Angola
Election observation: 2nd round of the Presidential elections in Chile

2018

JANUARY

Participation at the IX Congress of the PAIGC of Guinea Bissau
The SI warns of a new humanitarian catastrophe in Syria

FEBRUARY

SI denounces violation of freedom of assembly and other rights in Guinea Bissau
Election observation: General elections in Costa Rica
Election campaign event with the PDP, Paraguay
Meeting with the Chair of the SI Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic

MARCH

Participation in the founding congress of the Movement for Change in Greece
SI condemns terrorist attacks in Ouagadougou

Participation in the congress of the INC, India
Socialist International celebrates International Women's Day
Meetings re security situation in the Korean peninsula, Seoul, South Korea
Attendance at the 138th Assembly of the IPU and Meeting of parliamentarians from SI member parties at the IPU Assembly in Geneva
SI heartened by massive youth protests in cities of the US and other countries against gun violence

APRIL

SI denounces killing of unarmed Palestinians by Israel along Gaza border
Presence during election campaign in Hungary
Attendance at the PS Congress, France
Attendance at the Summit of the Americas in Lima, Peru, and participation in APRA event
Election observation: General elections in Paraguay
Declaration of the Socialist International on Nicaragua
Participation in Fatah Conference and Opening of Palestinian Council in Ramallah
Meetings with Israeli member parties in Jerusalem

MAY

Participation in 20th anniversary events of the passing of José Francisco Peña Gómez,
Dominican Republic
Socialist International condemns killing of demonstrators in Gaza
Meeting of the SI Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean in Montevideo, Uruguay
Meeting of the SI Committee for the CIS, Caucasus and Black Sea in Saint Petersburg, Russia

JUNE

5th Anniversary of the death of Pierre Mauroy
SI welcomes agreement signed yesterday by Greece and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
Meetings of the Ethics and Finance Committees in Geneva
Meeting of the SI Presidium in Geneva
Meeting of the SI Council at the UN in Geneva
Meeting of the SIW Council in Geneva
Meetings of the SI Ethics and Finance Committees in Geneva
Meeting of the SI Presidium in Geneva
Meeting of the SI Council at the United Nations in Geneva
Participation in the meeting of the SIW Council in Geneva

JULY

SI welcomes peace agreement between Eritrea and Ethiopia
Participation in the Sympo in Rhodes, Greece
Participation in the closing event of the election campaign of IBK in Mali
Observation of the Presidential elections in Mali

AUGUST

Congratulations to the President of Mali

SEPTEMBER

Ramin Hossein Panahi
SI condemns Iran's missile attack against Iranian Kurds in Iraq
Participation at the MPLA Congress in Luanda, Angola
Attendance at the inauguration of HE President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita of Mali
Meeting of the SI Presidium and heads of State and Government at the United Nations in New York during the high level segment of the UN General Assembly
In memoriam for Maria Jonas, Austria

OCTOBER

Meeting in Mexico with the newly elected President of the Congress of the Union, LXIV Legislature of Mexico, of the new majority conformed by the Movement of National Regeneration (Morena)
Meeting with the SI Vice-President from Mexico
Attendance at the 139th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union in Geneva
Meeting of SI member parliamentarians attending the 139th Assembly of the IPU in Geneva
In memoriam for Wim Kok, Netherlands

NOVEMBER

Meetings with members of the leadership of the Finnish Social Democratic Party in Helsinki
'A global call for a sustainable world society – before it's too late'

DECEMBER

Attendance at the inauguration of Andrés Manuel López Obrador as the new President of Mexico
Attendance at the UN Inter-Governmental Conference to adopt the Global Compacts on Migration held in Marrakesh, Morocco
Meeting with SI Vice-President Pedro Sánchez, President of the Spanish government, in Madrid

2019

JANUARY

Meetings of the SI Ethics and Finance Committees in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic
Meeting of the SI Presidium in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic
Meeting of the SI Council in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic
Meeting with SI President in Athens, Greece
Meetings of the SI Ethics and Finance Committees, and of the SI Presidium, Dominican Republic
Meeting of the SI Council in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic
Meeting of the SIW Council in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic

FEBRUARY

Mission to Venezuela
In Memoriam for Antoine Gizenga, DR Congo

MARCH

Participation in event organised by the PSOE (Gala Afrosocialista), Spain
SI marks International Women's Day
SI condemns despicable terrorist attack in Christchurch
SI in solidarity with the victims of Cyclone Idai
The world social democratic movement demands the release of Roberto Marrero in Venezuela
President Trump's decision on the Golan Heights
Participation in Congress of the PSI in Rome, Italy

APRIL

Attendance at 140th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, Doha, Qatar
Meeting of SI parliamentarians, Doha, Qatar
SI statement on the death penalty: In reference to Brunei and 54 other countries
SI calls for respect for the democratic process, Istanbul
Belarus and Equatorial Guinea: A call for urgent action in two continents
Visit to SDP headquarters, Finland, for elections
An election win for Finland
In Memoriam for Alan García, Peru
SI mourns terror victims in Sri Lanka
Release of Mikalai Statkevich and Andrés Esono Ondo
Participation in Congress of the RSD in Port-au-Prince, Haiti
Meetings with SI Haitian member parties, Haiti
Visit to the PSOE headquarters, Madrid, Spain, for elections
Socialists win in Spain

MAY

Observation of the general election, Panama

Election victory in Panama

In Memoriam for Alfredo Pérez Rubalcaba, Spain

The National Assembly, the only legitimate institution of the Venezuelan State, under authoritarian assault

Meetings with the PRD, Dominican Republic

Meetings in Helsinki, Finland with SDP and the Finnish SI Vice-President

Meeting with management of the ISSG which houses SI archives, Amsterdam, Netherlands

JUNE

Civilian rule and democracy for Sudan

Istanbul: SI calls for respect for democracy

Meetings in Tel Aviv with SI members and Israeli SI Vice-President, Israel

Meetings in Ramallah, Palestine, with SI member parties, with Palestinian SI Vice-President, and with the Prime Minister

Meetings, Washington

Meeting with the Chair of SICLAC, Dominican Republic

JULY

Participation in the Symi Symposium in Crete, Greece

In Memoriam for Ousmane Tanor Dieng, Senegal

Funeral of Ousmane Tanor Dieng, Senegal

Meetings in Dakar, Senegal, with the President and Foreign Minister

SI Meeting in Ramallah, Palestine

SI Meeting in Tel Aviv, Israel

AUGUST

Meetings with party representatives, Chile

Meeting at the State Department with Elliott Abrams, Washington, USA

In Memoriam for Dolores Renau, Spain

SEPTEMBER

Meetings in Rome, Italy

Attendance at UN Climate Summit, New York

Meeting of the SI Presidium and Heads of State and Government at the United Nations, New York, during the high-level segment of the UN General Assembly

OCTOBER

Deep concern for stability and human rights in north-eastern Syria

Attendance at the 141st Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union in Belgrade, Serbia

Meeting of SI parliamentarians, Belgrade, Serbia

Meeting with leadership of the SDPS, Serbia

Meeting with HE Mahamadou Issoufou, President of Niger

SI SG attends regional SIW meeting in Niger, hosted by the PNDS-Tarayya

“Women’s participation in Decision-Making Process – the challenges for a 50/50 World”

NOVEMBER

Meeting of the SI Committee for the CIS, Caucasus and Black Sea in Minsk, Belarus

Attendance at general elections, Spain

Meeting of the SI Africa Committee in Praia, Cape Verde
US Declaration on Israeli settlements an obstacle to peace
In Memoriam for Maarit Feldt-Ranta, Finland
Participation in Congress of the DPS in Podgorica, Montenegro

DECEMBER

SI at the COP25 in Madrid, Spain
SI calls for increased ambition and immediate action on the climate emergency
Meeting of the SI Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean (SICLAC) in Montego Bay, Jamaica

2020

JANUARY

Meetings with SI members, Chile
For the restoration of democratic order in Venezuela
Mission to Kyrgyzstan: Meetings with the President of the Republic, the speaker of the Parliament, parliamentary leaders and officials of the SDPK
SI commemorates International Holocaust Remembrance Day
Trump and Netanyahu have not proposed peace
Colloque Pierre Mauroy at the Senate in Paris, France

FEBRUARY

Attendance at Congress of the PAICV, Cabo Verde
In Memoriam for Marcelino dos Santos, Mozambique
Meeting with Chilean representatives in London, UK
Meeting with Kyrgyzstan Ambassador to London, UK
SI delegation to observe municipal elections in the Dominican Republic
Meeting with representative from Denmark
Attendance at homage to Ousmane Tanor Dieng, Senegal
Meeting with Secretary General of Finnish Social Democratic Party

MARCH

Conference organised by the Colosio Foundation in Mexico
SI marks International Women's Day
SI Delegation to observe second municipal elections in the Dominican Republic

APRIL

A time for true solidarity – SI statement on the Covid19 pandemic
COVID19: Views and updates 2020 - 2021
SI observes 50th anniversary of Earth Day

MAY

SI on the new coalition government in Israel
Venezuela, a concern for all democrats
In Memoriam for Abderrahmane Youssoufi, Morocco

JUNE

In Memoriam for Luigi Gizenga, DR Congo

SI denounces arrest of Mikalai Statkevich in Belarus

SI declares No! to all forms of racism and discrimination

SI on Venezuela - Democracy and its actors - enemies of Maduro

SI renews its call for international rejection of Israeli annexation and to support the two-state solution

SI protests against increased persecution of SI members and opposition in Belarus

JULY

SI calls for the immediate release of Mikalai Statkevich

SI rejects and condemns new steps by Maduro to eliminate opposition political parties

SI marks 25th anniversary of Srebrenica

In Memoriam for Pentti Väänänen, Finland

USA, Milwaukee - Virtual attendance at the Democratic National Convention

AUGUST

In Memoriam for John Hume, Northern Ireland

Solidarity with Beirut and the people of Lebanon

Belarus: SI rejects announced election results and condemns police violence

SI condemns military coup in Mali

SI on SDP election of Sanna Marin in Finland

SEPTEMBER

In Memoriam for Jan Sithole, Eswatini

SI on the 75th anniversary of the United Nations

SI calls for immediate ceasefire over Nagorno-Karabakh

OCTOBER

Deep concern over assassinations of political, social and human rights workers in Colombia

Virtual Meeting of the SI Presidium

SI honours the founding day of the United Nations, 24 October 1945

SI declaration on the plebiscite in Chile

SI on Escalating tensions in the Eastern Mediterranean

NOVEMBER

A welcome victory for Biden in the USA

In Memoriam for Saeb Erekat, Palestine

Solidarity with Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu and the CHP in Turkey

SI marks International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women

SI statement: Victory for President Kaboré in Burkina Faso

DECEMBER

SI calls for release of CDPA leader in Togo

Virtual Meeting of the SI Committee for the CIS, the Caucasus and the Black Sea

SI denounces illegitimate elections in Venezuela

Virtual Meeting of the SI Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean

SI calls for respect of the democratic process and election results in Romania

The SI protests the sentencing of Loujain al Hathloul in Saudi Arabia

2021

JANUARY

Work with SI Vice-President Sandra Torres in pursuit of her freedom
SI deplores assault on democracy in the US
A new horizon in the United States
Djibouti, a country neither free nor democratic
SI call to respect democracy in Kosovo
SI denounces the arrest of one of the main opposition leaders in Paraguay

FEBRUARY

SI condemns military coup in Myanmar
In Memoriam for Serge Gilles, Haiti
In defence of democracy in Haiti
A Just Russia Party Congress – via video
SI welcomes Mohamed Bazoum's election as President of Niger

MARCH

SI marks International Women's Day
In Memoriam for Bernal Jimenez, Costa Rica
Turkey's withdrawal from Istanbul Convention
SI calls to uphold democracy in Turkey
Preserving the constitutional order in Bolivia

APRIL

Myanmar - urgent action by the international community is needed
Social democracy delivering in Niger
In Guatemala the case against Sandra Torres is political persecution
In Memoriam for Vassos Lyssarides, Cyprus
SI in Solidarity with the people of India
Defending democracy and the constitution in Mongolia
Participation in SIW online Council meeting

MAY

Virtual meeting of the SI Kurdish working group
El Salvador: democracy requires control of the exercise of power
Solidarity with Colombia
SI calls for end to deadly violence between Israel and Palestine
Lukashenko's tyranny intensifies persecution of social democrats and pro-democracy leaders
Virtual meeting of IPU Assembly
SI condemns second coup in Mali in nine months

JUNE

Pursuit of international support for Mikalai Statkevich ahead of his trial on 24 June
SI SG meeting with the PRI, Mexico
Virtual meeting of the SI Africa Committee
Grave concern at the deterioration of the political situation in Nicaragua
Impending trial of Mikalai Statkevich in Belarus
Statkevich and other political prisoners at closed trial in jail

JULY

SI condemns assassination of President Moïse in Haiti
SI statement in protest at arrest of Freddy Guevara in Caracas
SI attention to situation in Tunisia
SI on the situation in Cuba

AUGUST

SI speaks out over the assassination of a member of the KDP-Iran
Meeting with the Chair of the SI Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean
Statement on solidarity with the people of Afghanistan

SEPTEMBER

Meetings in Washington
SI condemns military coup in Guinea
In Memoriam for Jorge Sampaio, Portugal

OCTOBER

Meeting in Mexico of the SI Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean
Attendance at the PSOE Congress in Valencia
Meeting with new International Secretary of the PSOE, Madrid, Spain
Nicaragua a contemporary victim of absolute power
In Memoriam for Fofi Gennimata, Greece

NOVEMBER

Urgent call to support the people of Myanmar
Lukashenko resumes closed trial of Statkevich and other political prisoners in Belarus
COP26 – The Challenge of saving our planet
SI presence at COP26 in Glasgow
SI declaration on COP26: Despite progress, threat of catastrophic climate change remains unacceptably high
SI presence at general elections in Chile
SI marks International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women
Attendance at 143rd Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, Madrid, Spain
Meeting of SI parliamentarians in Madrid
SI marks International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian people

DECEMBER

Mikalai Statkevich imminent sentencing in Belarus
SI protests as Mikalai Statkevich is sentenced to 14 years in prison
SI presence at second round of presidential elections in Chile
The SI congratulations to Gabriel Boric and the Chilean people on the election results of Sunday 19 December 2021

2022

JANUARY

Meetings with the PRD in the Dominican Republic
SI condemns violence in Kazakhstan
SI calls for swift restoration of democracy in Mali – SG in contact with Chair of the SI Africa Committee
Meeting with PSOE, Madrid
SI SG video message for USFP Congress, Morocco
In Memoriam for Ibrahim Boubacar Keita, Mali
SI demands release of President Kaboré in Burkina Faso

FEBRUARY

Meetings in San José, Costa Rica
SI observes legislative and first round of presidential elections in Costa Rica
Meeting with PSOE, Madrid, Spain
Virtual meeting of the SI Presidium regarding Ukraine and global security
Meeting with Ambassador of Azerbaijan, London
The integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine must be respected
SI condemns Russian invasion of Ukraine
Meeting with delegation from the PNP, Jamaica, in London

MARCH

Meeting with representatives from DRC, Brussels, Belgium
SI SG message for the Congress of the PAIGC, Guinea Bissau
SI SG video message for the 40th anniversary of UNT, Venezuela
SI welcomed to the inauguration of President Boric in Chile
Decision regarding membership of A Just Russia-Patriots-For the Truth Party
SI celebrates International Women's Day
SI expresses deep concern for the welfare of Almazbek Atambayev

APRIL

SI observes second round of presidential elections, Costa Rica
SI condemns war crimes in Ukraine
SG speaks at the Congress of the PAICV, Cabo Verde
Meeting with the President of Cabo Verde, José Maria Neves
Meeting at PS Portugal headquarters with Jamila Madeira
Meeting with HE President of Angola, João Lourenço
Meetings with MPLA, Angola
SI message to Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu regarding electricity cut in Turkey
In Memoriam for Wenceslao Mansogo Alo, Equatorial Guinea
SG visit to Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, meetings with SDPK
Attendance at Court hearing for Almazbek Atambayev Court, Kyrgyzstan
Visit to Almazbek Atambayev in prison, Kyrgyzstan
Attendance at the 130th anniversary event for the PSI, Genoa, Italy

MAY

SI condemns attempted assassination in Guinea-Bissau
SI denounces further repression of the opposition in Turkey
The SI reiterates urgent call for medical attention for Almazbek Atambayev
SI welcomes response to our call for medical attention for Almazbek Atambayev

JUNE

Meeting of the SI Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic
SI SG present in Maputo, Mozambique for 60th anniversary of Frelimo

JULY

Meeting of the SI Council in Geneva
In memoriam for José Eduardo dos Santos, Angola
SI denounces executions in Myanmar
Referendum in Tunisia

AUGUST

SI Statement on Nicaragua
Victory for Angola
In Memoriam for Mikhail Gorbachev

SEPTEMBER

SI calls for urgent international response to flooding in Pakistan
SI concerned by border clashes between Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan
Meeting of the SI Presidium in New York
Socialist International condemns abuse of authority and human rights violations in Iran

OCTOBER

In Memoriam for Araz Alizadeh, Azerbaijan
Meeting of the SI Committee for the Caucasus and the Black Sea
Meeting of the SI Africa Committee, Dakar, Senegal

NOVEMBER

SI celebrates Lula's victory
The SI on COP27



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