

**XXII Congress of the Socialist International, São Paulo**  
**27-29 October 2003**

**REPORT OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL**

**MOVING FORWARD IN A TROUBLED WORLD**

I am pleased to make my report to our Congress in São Paulo, this vibrant city at the heart of Brazil, Latin America's largest country and one of the most dynamic in the developing world.

I would like to thank the Partido dos Trabalhadores, PT, and all its leadership and members, for hosting this Congress. The PT has been involved in the activities of our International for a number of years and they have made us feel very welcome. And I must underline that what really made possible our Congress here was the decision of the people of Brazil, exactly one year ago, to elect Luiz Inácio "Lula" da Silva as President, to embrace the new direction that he represents, not only for Brazil but for all Latin America and the developing world. Which makes it all the more appropriate, as Brazil today moves forward at home and its influence rises on the world stage, that our Congress opens on the first anniversary of that political milestone.

This is the first Socialist International Congress of the new millennium, in a world still coming to grips with the terrorist attacks on 11 September two years ago, unsettled after the conflict in Iraq last spring, and facing fundamental global problems exacerbated by unilateral actions and policies that have caused grave concerns and dismay throughout the world and made people feel even less secure.

Our International, a family of political parties and organisations that spans the globe and will continue to grow during this Congress, is a political movement well equipped to overcome obstacles and dangers and lead the effort to create a new architecture for global governance. As social democrats we are convinced that we can prevail over the narrow and heartless neoliberal emphasis on self-interest and short-term profit that worsens the divisions both between and within nations. For if we embrace a new internationalism based on multilateral efforts and human solidarity, we will be able to build the structures of true and effective international cooperation, bringing people together to find common solutions for a better future.

**THE MIDDLE EAST**

The International has remained determined to keep an active and positive approach in the Middle East, to continue searching for concrete measures to keep alive the hopes of the people of the region for an end to the violence and for peaceful coexistence. The International has also stood out because we include within our family the voices of both Israelis and Palestinians. When progress has been made toward resolving the conflict, the International has been part of the effort. When things have taken a turn for the worse, we have been among those stepping forward, in close contact with our member parties, the Labour Party and Meretz of Israel and Fatah, the largest Palestinian organisation, to try to get the peace process back on track.

Since the resurgence of conflict in September 2000, the Middle East has been going through an especially difficult time and our International has responded in a number of ways to move things in a more constructive direction. In October 2000, soon after the latest cycle of violence began, we organised an SI delegation to the region, led by Thorbjørn Jagland, Chair of the SI Middle East Committee, SIMEC, and a member of the Mitchell Commission, to meet with the leaders of our member parties, and with officials of the Israeli government and the Palestinian National Authority, to urge that a path for negotiations to resume the peace process be secured. A few weeks later, on 2 November 2000, SIMEC met in Oslo, hosted by the Norwegian Labour Party, DNA, and agreed on a number of points, including the need for measures to rebuild confidence in the peace process among both the Israeli and Palestinian people.

Following a decision of the SI Executive, François Hollande, First Secretary of the Socialist Party of France and an SI Vice-President, and I traveled to Tel Aviv and Ramallah on 24 June 2001 for talks with the leaders of the SI member parties. This opened the way for both Yasser Arafat, President of the Palestinian Authority and President of Fatah, and Shimon Peres of the Israeli Labour Party and then Foreign Minister, to come to the SI Council in Lisbon, hosted by the Portuguese Socialist Party in June 2001, choosing the International as the framework in which to restart relations and contributing to our debates that resulted in the establishment of a Permanent Contact Group, consisting of Jagland, Hollande and myself, to support a return to negotiations.

At the end of 2001 the International appealed to both sides to put an immediate end to the violence and resume peace talks. We condemned the terrorist attacks against innocent civilians in Jerusalem and Haifa, reiterated our call for the Palestinian Authority to control armed groups and, at the same time, stated that the Israeli government had to understand that its attacks on the Palestinian Authority only served to exacerbate the situation.

On 14-15 March 2002, we organised a two-day SIMEC meeting in the region, gathering on the first day in Ramallah with the participation of Yasser Arafat and on the second in Tel Aviv where Israeli Labour Party and Meretz leaders addressed the delegates. We welcomed the new UN Security Council resolution that called, for the first time, for a Palestinian State, which, along with security for Israel, are the pillars we believe crucial for securing a lasting peace.

The following month, amid a particularly horrible surge in violence, the International issued an Urgent Appeal to both sides to redouble efforts to find grounds for a ceasefire. On 23 April 2002 the SI Executive held a special meeting in Madrid, hosted by the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party, PSOE, which included the participation of Shimon Peres and Hanni Al-Hassan in representation of Yasser Arafat. Five main points were agreed upon, opening the way for the historic resolution unanimously agreed by our Council in Casablanca on 31-May - 1 June 2002, in which the International announced that its three member parties in the region agreed that 'the mutual recognition of the State of Israel and the State of Palestine, as two states to live side by side, should be the initial commitment before negotiations start between the two peoples'.

While our International helped to establish such a positive framework for restarting the negotiating process, the enemies of peace in the region struck soon afterward, setting off a car bomb in northern Israel that killed at least sixteen people only a few days after our Council. The International condemned this terrorist act, stating that we were more determined than ever to press forward with our efforts and to support all international efforts to promote peace. A month later, we also condemned the Israeli air strike in Gaza City that killed fifteen Palestinians, stating that there could be no justification for such actions and that only a political solution to the conflict could lead to a lasting peace. Again in September 2002 the International was compelled to speak out, condemning

the suicide bombing that killed innocent civilians in Tel Aviv and strongly protesting the unjustifiable destruction of the civilian headquarters of the Palestinian Authority by Israeli troops and armour.

In December 2002, Thorbjørn Jagland and I held talks in Tel Aviv, Gaza and Ramallah with the leaderships of our member parties in the region, to hear directly of the latest developments. In early May of this year, the International welcomed the presentation of the Quartet's Roadmap to a permanent two-state solution to the conflict, stating that we were committed to its full and effective implementation.

To underline the International's backing for the Roadmap, Thorbjørn Jagland and I returned to Tel Aviv and Ramallah in May to meet with our member parties and to encourage all possible international support for the initiative. And yet again, amidst another positive development, came a resurgence of violence, a murderous bombing by Hamas in Jerusalem, which we condemned while expressing at the same time our concern about responses to terrorism that serve only to perpetuate the cycle of violence. Determined to accentuate the positive, we organised another meeting of SIMEC in Ramallah and Tel Aviv on 23 September and reaffirmed our commitment to build on recent achievements and to stay the course for a lasting peace no matter the actions of those who refuse to accept it.

### **Building democracy in Iraq**

The International has consistently argued that the support of the United Nations would be necessary for any action taken in Iraq, and that a lasting solution to the crisis could only be achieved through multilateral action by the international community in accordance with a resolution of the Security Council. In this regard, on 14 March of this year, our President António Guterres and I met with UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan at the organisation's headquarters in New York, and reaffirmed the full support of the International for the United Nations as indispensable for promoting international cooperation, peace and security in the world and emphasised the Socialist International's permanent commitment to multilateralism in addressing global challenges.

Now, more than half a year since the removal of Saddam Hussein from power, events have proven that the participation of the United Nations and a concerted multilateral approach remain essential for building democracy and ensuring security in Iraq. As the military invasion was underway, the SI Executive issued a statement deploring the so-called 'preventive' war against Iraq without the authorisation of the UN Security Council and reaffirmed our commitment to multilateralism and our intent to organise an international conference in Rome in support of Iraqi democrats. In April, the SI Executive issued a second statement, entitled 'For a legitimate post-war Iraq', in which it said that the participation of the entire international community would be critical in the reconstruction of Iraq, and emphasised that the conference in Rome would focus on the development of democracy in Iraq and securing peace throughout the Middle East.

We organised an SI delegation to Baghdad from 17 to 20 June, the first visit of an international political organisation to Iraq following the downfall of the Iraqi regime, for a dialogue with all the leading political parties and groups in the country and to express the support of the International for the development of democracy, respect for human rights and freedoms and a future of peace and inclusion for all Iraqi citizens. The members of the delegation were Massimo D'Alema, former Prime Minister of Italy, of the Democrats of the Left, DS; Abderrahman Youssoufi, former Prime Minister of Morocco, of the Socialist Union of Popular Forces, USFP; Thorbjørn Jagland, former Prime Minister of Norway, of the Norwegian Labour Party, DNA; Zlatko Lagumdžija, former Prime Minister of Bosnia and Herzegovina, of the Social Democratic Party, SDP BiH; and myself.

The SI delegation was welcomed on its arrival by a large gathering of leaders and representatives from nearly fifty different parties and ethnic and religious movements and, while in Baghdad, held a series of further meetings with many of them. These included meetings with representatives from the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, PUK, headed by its leader Jalal Talabani; from the Iraqi Independent Democrats, led by its President Adnan Al Pachachi; from the National Democratic Party, led by its President Nasir Chadirji; from the Al Dawa Party, headed by its leader Ibrahim Al-Jafari; with the leadership of the Kurdistan Democratic Party, KDP, including Hoshiyar Al-Zebari; a delegation of the Supreme Council for Islamic Revolution in Iraq, SCIRI, led by Adil Abdul Mahdi; with Nori Al-Badran of the Iraqi National Accord; of the Arab Socialist Movement, headed by its President Abdul Allah Al-Nasrawi; with a delegation of the Iraqi Communist Party headed by its General Secretary Hamad Majid Mousa; of the Assyrian Democratic Movement headed by its General Secretary Yonadam Y. Kanna; and with members of the leadership of the Iraqi National Congress. A special meeting was also held with the Iraqi Leadership Council with the participation of its seven member organisations.

During its visit, the delegation expressed the full support of the International for the Iraqi people in their efforts to build democratic institutions, and for the early establishment of an Iraqi Interim Authority leading to the formation of an internationally recognised, independent government.

The members of the delegation also met with Sergio Vieira de Mello, Special Representative of the UN Secretary General Annan, to discuss the UN's work in Iraq and to reiterate the International's complete support.

Many of the leaders and representatives we met with in Baghdad participated in the Socialist International Conference 'Building Democracy in Iraq - Working for Peace in the Middle East' held in Rome on 18-19 July. A number were members of the newly formed Iraqi Governing Council, including Adnan Al-Pachachi, Naseer Al-Chadirji, Hamid Majid Mousa, Yonadam Y. Kanna, Ibrahim Al-Jafari, Samir Shakir Mahmoud Sumaiday and Jalal Talabani, who is with us here in São Paulo and as one of the nine rotating Presidents of the Governing Council will be assuming that position during the month of November. Other participants included representatives and delegates from the Kurdistan Democratic Party, KDP; the Arab Socialist Movement; the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq, SCIRI, the Iraqi National Congress; the Assyrian Democratic Party; the Turkoman National Democratic Party; and the Turkoman Brotherhood Party.

Israeli and Palestinian political leaders and delegates were also present to address current developments and prospects for moving forward the Middle East peace process. The Conference, hosted by the Democrats of the Left, DS, whose delegation was headed by its General Secretary Piero Fassino and President Massimo D'Alema, and the Italian Democratic Socialists, SDI, led by Chair Enrico Boselli, consisted of a series of panel discussions. The first day of debates continued the dialogue undertaken by the SI delegation to Baghdad in June on the essential elements for building democracy in Iraq. The first panel concentrated on 'From dictatorship to democracy: creating the new institutions', the second on 'Guaranteeing human rights and fundamental freedoms for all Iraqis', the third was 'Civil society and women's participation in the political process', the fourth 'For a future of inclusion: empowering people in a multi-ethnic, multi-religious and multi-cultural society', and the fifth on 'Regional and International perspectives for the new Iraq'.

The conclusions of the first day, 'A strategy for a sustainable democratic, free and united Iraq', were presented by Massimo D'Alema, who emphasised the solidarity of our International with all democratic forces in Iraq, the common will to engage the entire international community in supporting the democratic process in Iraq and the need to enhance the role of the United Nations.

Discussions on the second day, focusing on 'Working for Peace in the Middle East', were introduced by Piero Fassino and Thorbjørn Jagland, Chair of the SI Middle East Committee, and counted with the participation of Shimon Peres, Chair of the Israel Labour Party; Yossi Sarid, Leader of Meretz, and Nabil Shaat, Foreign Minister of the Palestinian Authority, as well as representatives of other SI member parties.

The first two panel discussions addressed 'The way forward for peace: the Roadmap' and 'Implementing peace in Israeli and Palestinian societies'. The third dealt with 'Civil society and communities advancing peace and cooperation', with contributions from Israeli and Palestinian Mayors and local authority leaders; and the fourth examined 'Promoting peace: the role of regional and international actors'.

Sergio Vieira de Mello sent a message to the Conference in which he saluted the members of the Governing Council, who were representing Iraq in the international arena for the first time in the nation's new history, and noted that the formation of the Council was a first major step to fulfilling UN Security Council Resolution 1483 for the quick establishment of Iraqi self-rule.

Tragically, Vieira de Mello was killed a month later in the horrible bombing attack on the UN offices in Baghdad. The International immediately expressed its strongest condemnation of this act of terror, which also took the lives of many others of the international community who were contributing to the cause of peace and cooperation. Before he died, Vieira de Mello said, 'Don't let them pull out the mission', an expression of his abiding faith in the work of the United Nations, a faith shared by our International.

### **The Kurdish Question**

The work of the International on issues related to the Kurds continued during the period, and our efforts, engagement and commitment proved to be timely and valuable given the events this year in Iraq.

The SIMEC Working Group on the Kurdish Question gathered in Brussels on 16 March 2001, hosted by the Socialist Party, PS, of Belgium, to review the latest developments regarding the situation of the Kurdish people with representatives from the SI member Democratic Party of Iranian Kurdistan, PDKI, the Kurdistan Democratic Party, KDP, and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, PUK, of Iraq, and from the People's Democracy Party, Hadeq, from Turkey. It was agreed to send a mission to Northern Iraq, which the International organised on 17-23 June 2001. The members of the Mission were: Conny Fredriksson, Chair of the SIMEC Working Group on the Kurdish Question, and Morgan Johansson, from the Swedish Social Democratic Party, SAP; Karim Pakzad, from the Socialist Party of France, PS; and Karl Schramek, from the Social Democratic Party of Austria, SPÖ. The Mission met the leaders of the two Kurdish parties: Jalal Talabani of the PUK and Massoud Barzani of the KDP, and observed the level of political and social organisation of these parties in their areas of Iraq.

The Working Group met on 22 February 2002 in Brussels, again hosted by the Socialist Party, PS, of Belgium, to review a report from the delegation to Northern Iraq. It gathered again on 27 August of that year in the context of a seminar organised by the Olof Palme Foundation on 'National Minorities, Regional Self Government and Democracy in Iraq, Iran and Turkey' on 26-27 August 2002 in Sweden. The Committee underlined our support for the Iraqi people in their desire for change and presciently emphasised that building a future democratic Iraq must include the participation of all sectors of the population.

With regard to the situation in Iran, the International, at our Council in Rome on 20-21 January of this year, adopted a resolution on the Iranian Kurds in which we condemned the violations of human rights committed by the opponents of reform in Iran, including the death sentences and executions of Kurdish militants, denounced the repression against the Kurds in the country generally and reaffirmed our support for the legitimate rights of the Kurds in Iran and our solidarity with SI member Democratic Party of Iranian Kurdistan, PDKI.

## **AFRICA**

The Socialist International has never flinched nor turned away from Africa, no matter how difficult the challenges. We remained firm during the bleakest periods in the struggle against apartheid in South Africa and we refuse now to submit to the pessimism with which much of the world views the continent. Rather we clearly perceive and acknowledge that Africa has gained the least from globalisation and suffered the most from the injustice of an increasingly unequal world economy. At the same time, we recognise that the people of Africa, despite the worst of conditions, remain among the most dynamic and resourceful in the world and, if given the opportunity in an atmosphere of international solidarity, can move forward to provide a better future for themselves and for coming generations.

The commitment of our International to Africa, and to ensuring that Africa and other parts of world establish and strengthen mutually beneficial relations, has been evident in a number of ways. These include special SI missions and delegations to the continent, keeping in close contact with our member parties as they carry out their work and struggle against difficult odds in Africa's various subregions and organising meetings of the International that extend our influence in Africa and enhance the interaction and cooperation between our growing number of member parties there and elsewhere in the world.

The SI Council meeting in Maputo on 10-11 November 2000 brought together hundreds of delegates for an indepth discussion on, 'The way forward for Africa: a worldwide commitment for development, peace and democracy'. The meeting, following on our Council in Cape Town in 1995, was hosted by Frelimo and its leader President Joaquim Chissano. Participants considered the international actions necessary to promote development, peace and democracy in Africa, and emphasised in a wide-ranging declaration that all three objectives had to be pursued simultaneously because no one of them can exist without the other two.

Working toward the Council in Maputo, we organised meetings of the SI Africa Committee in Yaoundé, Cameroon, on 30 June - 1 July 2000, and in Praia, Cape Verde, on 30-31 October. The gathering in Yaoundé was chaired by Ousmane Tanor Dieng, Socialist Party of Senegal, and Chair of the Committee, and was hosted by the Social Democratic Front, SDF of Cameroon, and its National Chair, John Fru Ndi. Participants addressed the need for strengthening democratic institutions and electoral processes in Africa and ways to advance the International's global campaign to fight poverty in Africa, and agreed in a declaration that democracy, good governance and social justice were necessary conditions for peace.

The host of our gathering in Praia was the African Party of Cape Verde's Independence, PAICV, and much of the focus was on Côte d'Ivoire where only days earlier the electoral system, through which Laurent Gbagbo, leader of the SI member Ivorian Popular Front, FPI, was elected President of the country, had come under threat. The International, in constant communication with President Gbagbo and FPI representatives, issued a statement on 24 October condemning the violent interruption of the vote counting process by military authorities and the attempt of General Robert

Guei to retain power illegitimately. In Praia we were happy to salute the people of Côte d'Ivoire who had mobilised to successfully defend the election and called on the international community to support the process of strengthening democratic institutions in the country.

On 1-2 June 2001, we organised the first ever meeting of the International in Niger, as our Africa Committee gathered in Niamey, hosted by the SI member Party for Democracy and Socialism of Niger, PNDS. Delegates from across the continent addressed a number of issues, including the challenge of resolving armed conflicts that continued in a number of countries and subregions, which was of particular relevance as we prepared for a major SI initiative in the Great Lakes Region.

The Socialist International Mission to the Great Lakes Region was carried out from 18 to 23 February 2002 and included Ousmane Tanor Dieng; Nanié-Coulibaly Safiatou, a member of the FPI leadership; Steen Christensen, Social Democratic Party of Denmark; and myself. At a time of heightened concern about increasing violence in the Great Lakes area, the Mission visited Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Burundi and Angola as part of the International's backing for peace efforts throughout Africa and to support in particular the Inter-Congolese Dialogue.

After preliminary discussions in Abidjan with President Gbagbo, the members of the Mission flew to Kinshasa, where we met with key figures in the Congo peace process, from both the government and opposition sides and from civil society, then went to the Burundian capital of Bujumbura, where they expressed to political leaders of the country the International's backing for the peace process following the agreement of August 2000. In Luanda, the Mission met with leaders of the governing party, SI member Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola, MPLA, and underlined our support for dialogue and national reconciliation following the end of civil war in that country.

At the SI Council in Casablanca three months later, we expressed satisfaction that significant progress had been made towards peace in Congo, and fully supported in particular the efforts of the United Nations there. Today we are continuing to closely follow the situation in the Great Lakes, in communication with member parties and other contacts established during the SI Mission, and remain concerned about recurring violence and setbacks, all of which requires that we continue to be steadfast in our support for peace efforts in the region.

The International continues to speak out on behalf of political prisoners in Africa and other regions. On 10 June 2002, we denounced the sentencing to long prison sentences of Plácido Micó, Secretary General of the SI member Convergence for Social Democracy, CPDS, and dozens of others in Equatorial Guinea on questionable charges of being involved in an alleged coup plot, and urged the UN Human Rights Commission to renew the mandate of its special rapporteur on Equatorial Guinea. We had similarly denounced the imprisonment in Guinea in 1998 of Alpha Condé, leader of the SI member Guinean People's Assembly, RPG, and were pleased when he was released in March 2001 and was able to participate a few months later at our Council in Lisbon.

When the Africa Committee met in Luanda on 26-27 July 2002, hosted by the MPLA, it was the first meeting of the International to be held in Angola. The Angolan post office marked the occasion by issuing a special series of stamps depicting the images of the International's campaigns in fighting poverty in Africa, abolishing the death penalty, canceling the debt of the poorest countries and stopping violence against women.

In a particularly important initiative, the International organised a delegation of legal experts to Nigeria from 16 to 20 October 2002 in response to the sentencing to death by stoning of Amina Lawal, and previously of Safiya Hussaini, under the Sharia-based penal codes recently put into effect. The effort, undertaken amidst worldwide concern about the violation of rights of women in Nigeria

and elsewhere, was part of our work on two of the International's campaigns — abolishing the death penalty and stopping violence against women. The experts, with experience in different legal systems from around the world, included Professor Perry Wallace of the Washington College of Law of the American University in Washington DC; Professor Abdelouab Maalmi of the Faculty of Juridical, Economic and Social Sciences of the University Hassan II in Casablanca, Morocco; and Dr. Gabriel Lansky, an Attorney at Law and human rights expert from Austria. The delegation met with government officials, political figures and representatives of women's rights groups and other non-governmental organisations in Lagos, held further meetings in Kaduna State in the north of Nigeria where Sharia law is in effect and underlined to everyone the deep concern of the International on this matter. We were therefore very gratified this past September when a Nigerian court of appeal struck down the sentence against Amina Lawal and set her free, and we will continue to monitor closely further developments on this issue.

On 19 September 2002 the International again responded to an attack on democracy in Côte d'Ivoire, condemning the attempted coup d'état and criminal violence involving members of the country's armed forces and other groups. We then organised an urgent meeting of the Africa Committee in Abidjan on 18 October to show our solidarity with President Gbagbo and the FPI and to back his decision to engage in an all-inclusive dialogue during the ceasefire mediated by the Economic Community of West African States, ECOWAS. Unfortunately, the situation continues to be of great concern. At our Council in Rome on 20-21 January 2003, we stated that the attempted coup in Côte d'Ivoire threatened to put a brake on democratisation elsewhere in Africa and called for a lasting political solution based on constitutional norms and international legal principles. Since then we have backed all international efforts to broker a settlement that would restore the democratic rule of law for all citizens of Côte d'Ivoire.

In preparation for our Congress, the SI Africa Committee gathered in Cotonou, Benin, on 15-16 September, hosted by the SI member Social Democratic Party, PSD. Delegates from throughout the region and beyond discussed Africa's contribution to the Congress, with particular emphasis on global governance and the need for the full involvement of Africa in the reform of international institutions.

## **LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN**

The International has always been in the forefront of the struggle for democracy and human rights in Latin America and the Caribbean. Wherever dictatorships have fallen in the region, we have been there, acting in solidarity with democratic forces and bringing to bear all available assistance from the international community. We have also followed through in aiding with the no less difficult task of strengthening democratic institutions to ensure people's participation in politics and to forestall another cycle of anti-democratic rule. Enormous challenges remain in Latin America and the Caribbean, including the persistence of political violence in a number of countries and the harsh winds of globalisation that have exacerbated inequalities, increased poverty and undermined national economies practically everywhere.

Which is why the efforts of our International to meet people's demand for a workable and more just alternative to the so-called neoliberal model has great resonance in this part of the world, and particularly here in Brazil, whose great resources and enormous potential are surpassed only by the spirit and determination of its people to succeed in strengthening their democracy and building a better future for coming generations. In this regard, I would like to underline the long solidarity of our International with the Brazilian people and all their democratic leaders, particularly during the



years of military rule and the transition to democracy, with our SI member Democratic Labour Party, PDT, led by Leonel Brizola, as well as with the PT since the 1980s.

In Peru, after years of working for democracy against the authoritarian regime of Alberto Fujimori, our International was especially pleased by the democratic transition carried out there through the holding of free and fair elections in the spring of 2001. During the crisis in April and May 2000, as the International issued statements deploring Fujimori's attempts to subvert the electoral process, I went to Peru and met with democratic opposition leader Alejandro Toledo, who would be elected President of the country, members of our SI member Peruvian Aprista Party, PAP, and representatives of other democratic forces to reaffirm the full support of the International for peaceful democratic change in the country. On 11-12 June 2001, at the meeting of the SI Committee on Latin America and the Caribbean, SICLAC, in Buenos Aires, we expressed our satisfaction at the holding of democratic elections, congratulated Alan García on his part in them and reiterated our confidence in the PAP.

The Caribbean, with its diverse array of nations, languages and cultures, has continued to be a focus of the International's activities and, as in Latin America, we have a great presence there. This was evident when we organised a meeting of SICLAC in Kingston, Jamaica, on 1-2 September 2000, hosted by the People's National Party, PNP, and its leader Prime Minister P.J. Patterson. The meeting was chaired by former President of Argentina Raúl Alfonsín, Co-Chair of the Committee, and counted on the participation of delegations from throughout Latin America and the Caribbean, including leaders and representatives of SI member parties in government in the Caribbean countries of St. Lucia, Dominica, Barbados and the Dominican Republic, as well as Ralph Gonsalves, leader of the SI member Unity Labour Party, ULP, who would be elected Prime Minister of St. Vincent and the Grenadines in March 2001.

At the SICLAC meeting in Kingston, delegates emphasised that globalisation had severely limited national decision-making capacity in Latin America and the Caribbean and had put at particular risk the small states of the Caribbean, and that in response a deepening of democracy based on social democratic values was needed. SICLAC continued its work on these and related global issues at meetings we organised in cities in each of the subregions of Latin America: Buenos Aires on 11-12 June 2001. Managua on 20-21 October 2001, Caracas on 19-20 July 2002 and in Mexico City only days ago.

On 26-27 November 2001 we organised in Santo Domingo the first SI Council ever to be held in the Caribbean, hosted by the Dominican Revolutionary Party, PRD, which had been in the forefront in the struggle for democracy in the Dominican Republic and throughout the region and was now in power following the victory of the party in the 2000 election. Our Council, coming only a few months after the horrible events of 11 September, focused on responding to terror within the framework of 'Working for a more secure and fairer world'. The Council also concentrated on strengthening democracy in Latin America and the Caribbean, particularly in Venezuela and Haiti.

In May 2002, I had the opportunity to travel to Venezuela to meet with SI member Democratic Action, AD, other political parties and Venezuelan civil society and to reiterate the position of the International that the 'deficit of democracy' in Venezuela should be overcome through inclusive dialogue. Two months later we organised the SICLAC meeting in Caracas as a concrete expression of the International's backing for efforts toward a peaceful and democratic solution to the ongoing crisis. The gathering counted on the participation of leaders and representatives of numerous Venezuelan political and trade union organisations, all of whom helped contribute to a detailed analysis of the difficult situation of democracy in their country. In January 2003 our Council in Rome adopted a resolution emphasising that democracy was in jeopardy in Venezuela and reiterating our

full support for the efforts of the Organisation of American States, OAS, to promote a democratic outcome.

In the International's work to strengthen democratic institutions in Latin Americas and the Caribbean, a principal focus has been on political parties and the need to ensure that they are at the center of politics providing a channel through which citizens can express their concerns and their political will. On behalf of the International I therefore participated in an OAS roundtable on democratic governance in Santiago in August 2002 and an OAS hemispheric gathering in Vancouver in December 2002, and can report that further cooperation with the OAS on strengthening political parties is planned. I also participated in June 2002, along with representatives of the Christian Democratic and Liberal Internationals, in a meeting on political party development hosted by the National Democratic Institute, NDI, in Washington, with whom we maintain close cooperation. In September of that year I had the opportunity to be a guest at their well attended annual W. Averell Harriman ceremony, and in March of this year I went with President Guterres to Washington DC for a program organised by NDI that included a series of meetings with leading figures of the Democratic Party.

Haiti continues to present an enormous challenge and during a particularly difficult period in August 2001 I had the opportunity to meet with opposition parties there - including the SI members Party of the National Congress of Democratic Movements, KONAKOM, the Revolutionary Progressive Nationalist Party of Haiti, PANPRA, and the Organisation of the People in Struggle, OLP - as well as with representatives of the government of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, to reaffirm the support of the International for democratisation and respect for human rights of the Haitian people. The following December the International condemned both the armed assault on the National Palace in Port-au-Prince and the subsequent attacks by government supporters against opposition parties, journalists and leading members of the Democratic Convergence alliance. We have also continued to call on the government to join the Convergence in negotiations mediated by the Organisation of American States, OAS, so that the crisis can be resolved through the holding of peaceful and fully free and fair elections.

The International has continued to express support for the decolonisation of Puerto Rico and, having maintained our solidarity with the demand of the Puerto Rican majority for a stop to military exercises on Vieques Island, was pleased when the U.S. Navy finally withdrew from Vieques in the spring of this year. Our support for the effort, and especially for the Puerto Rican Independence Party, PIP, led by Rubén Berríos Martínez, an Honorary Vice-President of the International, has been constant and has included a series of statements and resolutions that emphasised our concern about the bombing exercises and deplored the arrest and sentencing of Berríos Martínez to four months in prison in 2001 for peacefully protesting the use of Vieques for military purposes.

Violence comes in different forms in Latin America and the Caribbean and the International is quick to respond when a member of our social democratic family is targeted. So it was that in April 2002 we issued a declaration condemning the brutal physical attack on Rolando Araya, an SI Vice-President and leader of the SI member National Liberation Party, PLN, and members of his family in Costa Rica following the presidential elections there, and expressing hope that those responsible would be brought to justice and that Costa Rica remain a model of democracy and respect for human rights.

On 28 March 2003 the International called upon the Cuban authorities to release without delay dozens of leaders of non-governmental and other civic and social organisations who had been detained, recalling that Cuba on numerous occasions, including at regional summits, had formally committed itself to respecting internationally recognised rights and freedoms and called for the

government to ensure that all Cuban citizens enjoyed freedom of expression, association and assembly. When two weeks later the nearly eighty people were given long jail sentences by Cuban courts, the SI Executive denounced as 'inadmissible and unjustifiable' the verdicts against those 'whose crime was to hold opinions different from the government's'. The SI called on the Cuban authorities to 'release without delay of all those detained'. At the same time, during the recent gathering of SICLAC in Mexico City, we rejected the destabilising measures recently taken by the United States government against Cuba, which put peace in the region at risk.

The SICLAC meeting in Mexico City was held on 17-18 October, hosted by the Party of Democratic Revolution, PRD, and the Institutional Revolutionary Party, PRI. Delegates from throughout the region identified the battle against inequality as the first priority in the effort to legitimise democracy, and underlined the dismantling of agricultural subsidies in developed countries and the restructuring of Latin America's debt as crucial to the health of economies in the region. Also discussed were the situations of a number of countries in Latin America, including Bolivia, where we noted as positive the transfer of power within the Constitution following four weeks of intense popular and indigenous mobilisation, which opens the possibility of a fresh approach to the difficult problems faced by Bolivian society.

### **Our commitment to peace and democracy in Colombia**

Peace, democracy and solidarity with the people of Colombia were the central themes of a special regional meeting organised by the International in Bogotá on 20 May 2002, hosted by the Liberal Party of Colombia, PLC, and including the participation of delegates from South America, Central America and the Caribbean. The gathering provided an opportunity to reaffirm our solidarity with the people of Colombia, as they struggle to find ways to end the violence in their country and secure a lasting peace, and to underline peace and democracy as fundamental aims of our SI family worldwide.

Raúl Alfonsín, the Co-Chair of SICLAC and a Vice-President of the International, emphasised that securing democracy and peace meant putting human beings rather than markets at the center of globalisation. Horacio Serpa, presidential candidate of the PLC, called for globalising solidarity to counterbalance the negative socio-economic effects of globalisation. An important conclusion of the gathering was that the Socialist International had always been committed to finding real solutions to real problems through democratic politics, something that was needed now more than ever to counter efforts to depoliticise practically everything and to cloud key issues by promising people easy ways out. It was also agreed that there must be a greater convergence of the left worldwide to better respond to the dangerous homogenisation on the right.

### **ASIA AND THE PACIFIC**

The International's activities in this vast, dynamic and critical region of the world have continued to center on collective support and international cooperation for peace, security and the defence of democracy, all of which has strengthened our social democratic identity throughout Asia and the Pacific. Because of our values and our solidarity with those whose fundamental rights have been deprived or are under attack, the International continues to bring together the various people of the region in our global movement of citizens working in cooperation for the common good.

On 21 May 2000 the International strongly condemned the attack on the democratically elected government of Fiji headed by Prime Minister Mahendra Chaudry, Secretary General of the SI member Fiji Labour Party, FLP, and called on the international community 'to take all necessary measures to contribute to preserving democratic rights and institutions in Fiji'.

On 7-8 August 2000 we organised a meeting of the Asia-Pacific Committee in Wellington, hosted by the New Zealand Labour Party, NZLP, and its leader Prime Minister Helen Clark, and welcomed Mahendra Chaudry to the gathering. He thanked the International for our unequivocal support during the assault on the Fiji parliament where he and others were held hostage, and called for a concerted plan of action to restore democracy and constitutional rule to Fiji. Phil Goff, Foreign Minister of New Zealand spoke for all of us in emphasising the International's solidarity with the Fiji Labour Party and with any and all of our members who come under threat. José Ramos Horta, Vice-President of the National Congress of Timorese Resistance, CNRT, and winner of the Nobel Peace Prize, noted how important such support was, that worldwide solidarity had been crucial in the struggle for democracy and independence in East Timor. The Committee issued a Statement that underlined the International's commitment to ending authoritarianism and dictatorship where they still exist in the region and providing sustained support for the democratic rule of law where it is threatened or under attack.

In Wellington we also expressed our dismay about the lack of a democratic opening in Burma, where the International has been firm in its support of Aung San Suu Kyi since her election was overturned by the military more than a decade ago. On 30 August 2000, the International again spoke out, condemning the actions of the military regime in Burma to restrict the movement of Aung San Suu Kyi and officials from her party, the National League for Democracy, NLD. Burma was again on the agenda at the Asia-Pacific Committee we held on 5-6 March 2001 in Tokyo, where we noted that the conditions of repression remained in force in Burma and called upon the entire international community to join us in demanding the release of Aung San Suu Kyi and all other political prisoners.

The meeting in Tokyo was hosted by the Social Democratic Party, SDP, of Japan, and was chaired by Takako Doi, leader of the SDP, Co-Chair of the Committee and an SI Vice-President. The gathering gave a boost to the process of reconciliation between South Korea and North Korea by bringing together representatives of the ruling parties of both countries - the Millennium Democratic Party of the Republic of Korea in the South, and the Workers Party of Korea from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in the North. Efforts toward reunification on the Korean peninsula have continued to be a focus of our work to promote peace and security in the region and, while bumps in the road will always be encountered, our meeting in Manila showed that progress is possible through dialogue, confidence-building and broad international support.

On 25 September 2001 the International expressed deep concern about the breach of constitution by the new authorities in Fiji that threatened the reestablishment of democratic rule. Although the Fiji Labour Party, by coming a close second in elections and by virtue of the 1997 multiracial constitution, was entitled to cabinet seats in proportion to the number of seats it gained in parliament, it was shut out. The International reiterated its solidarity with the FLP when the Asia-Pacific Committee met in Manila on 11-12 April 2002, and since then has maintained support for the party in its continuing efforts before the courts in Fiji for the establishment of a pluralistic, multiethnic government in line with the country's Constitution.

In Manila, SI delegates from throughout the region were welcomed by President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo who, in her address to the Committee, emphasised the integral role of our International in the long struggle for democracy in the Philippines. The meeting was hosted by the Philippines Democratic Socialist Party, PDSP, a member of President Macapagal Arroyo's government, whose

leader Norberto Gonzales underlined the need for greater international cooperation against terrorist activities which presented new threats to peace and security in the region. The Committee issued a Statement that reaffirmed the International's commitment, 'in solidarity with social democratic parties in all regions, to resolving conflicts through the promotion of dialogue and cooperation, both within nations and between them'. It underlined as well the importance of promoting democracy as integral to the effort to achieve peace and security, particularly with respect to Burma, the attacks against democratic rule in Nepal and the deficit of democracy in Malaysia.

The Committee also emphasised the efforts of the International to seek greater dialogue between social democratic parties and moderate Muslim groups in Asia and the Pacific, including Indonesia, a large country undergoing a difficult period of transition. In this regard I should add that last March I had the opportunity to participate in a National Democratic Institute planning meeting, held in Frankfurt, for a Congress of Democrats of the Islamic World.

On 6 May 2002 the International welcomed the freeing from house arrest of Aung San Suu Kyi, but called on the military regime in Burma to take further measures toward real political change, to move ahead 'to a more significant phase', as Aung San Suu Kyi put it. Unfortunately, the regime returned to heightened repression and on 3 June of this year the International condemned the detention yet again of Aung San Suu Kyi, as well as one hundred members of the NLD, and the shutting down of political party offices and universities. On 3 September we further condemned her continued detention and reiterated our call for her and all other political prisoners to be immediately and unconditionally released. The International, as always, will continue to back the struggle of the people of Burma for political freedom and fully back all international efforts, particularly by the United Nations, in support of their democratic rights and aspirations.

The International has also continued to closely follow developments in Pakistan. At our Council in Rome on 20-21 January of this year, we reiterated our concern for the lack of democracy in that country, noting that independent observers and the European Union had determined that the 10 October 2002 parliamentary elections were seriously flawed. At the same time, we viewed with satisfaction that our member Pakistan People's Party, PPP, had gained a plurality of votes despite the enormous disadvantages and electoral manipulation that it faced, and reaffirmed our support for the people of Pakistan in their struggle to restore democracy in their country.

In keeping with our concern about threats to peace and security on the Asian subcontinent, the International in May 2002 condemned the deadly attack at an Indian army camp in Kashmir and urged both India and Pakistan to do everything possible to reduce tensions, starting with greater efforts toward initiating a peace process. We also recognised the work of civil society organisations for democracy in Kashmir and reiterated our commitment to supporting all initiatives for the peaceful resolution of the Kashmir conflict.

## **EUROPE**

The International remains in the forefront of the effort to expand the European community of democracies through regional initiatives and cooperation based on social democratic values, and to resolve conflicts and promote equitable economic growth and social justice. This is a combined effort of our parties from throughout the continent to ensure that European integration works for all citizens.

The International, having consistently supported democratic change in the Balkans, was gratified when the people of Serbia freed themselves from the Milosevic regime. At the time, our Committee

for Central and Eastern Europe, SICEE, was meeting in Zagreb, on 6-7 October 2000, and delegates from Serbian social democratic organisations participating in the gathering provided us with up-to-the-minute reports as the dramatic transition unfolded in Belgrade. The gathering was hosted by the SI member Croatian Social Democratic Party, SDP, head of the country's government, and we underlined in the Declaration of Zagreb, issued at the end of our discussions, that the new democratic phase initiated in Croatia the previous year had served to encourage democratic change in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Participants in the meeting, which was chaired by Piero Fassino, DS, Italy, and László Kovács, MSzP, Hungary, Co-Chairs of SICEE, also discussed the challenges and opportunities of European Union enlargement, and emphasised that enlargement required enhanced cooperation policies with regard to Russia.

Prior to the meeting in Zagreb, we organised a Socialist International delegation to Russia, in accordance with the decision of our Council in Brussels in April 2000, for a special one-day discussion with Russian political leaders, representatives and other personalities on 'A vision for the future - a dialogue on Social Democracy'. The SI delegation was headed by leader of the Social Democratic Party and Prime Minister of Sweden, Göran Persson, the member of the SI Executive entrusted with matters concerning Russia. The Russian participants, including leaders and representatives of all the main social democratic organisations in that country, pledged to unite their efforts and strengthen their relationships and cooperation, while our delegation underlined the commitment of the International to deepen its cooperation with those in Russia identifying with social democratic values and principles.

We organised the first ever SI meeting in Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, FRY, on 17-18 September 2001, when SICEE gathered in Belgrade, a manifestation of the International's continuing support for the democratic revolution in the FRY and our recognition of the progress being made there. Participants included leaders and representatives of social democratic and other democratic organisations from throughout the FRY, and the agenda focused on the Balkans, with emphasis on international support for the reform process underway and the prospects for European Union enlargement. The Belgrade Declaration agreed by the delegates placed emphasis on enhancing the support of the International for political forces of social democratic inspiration in the Balkans in the effort to strengthen democracy.

When SICEE met the following year in Ljubljana, Slovenia, it was an occasion to recall that not long ago the task of securing peace and democracy in the Balkans seemed extremely difficult, but that now we could see that most people in the region were working to build and strengthen democratic systems, with social democracy as one of the leading political forces. The meeting, held on 12-13 July 2002, was hosted by the United List of Social Democrats, ZLSD, led by Borut Pahor, President of the National Assembly in Slovenia, and was again chaired by the Committee Co-Chairs Piero Fassino and László Kovács, who underlined that for the first time there were democratically elected governments in every country of southern Europe. We also noted with satisfaction the recent electoral successes of social democratic parties in a number of countries in Central and Eastern Europe, further indication of the vitality and relevance of social democratic principles and the growing embrace of social democratic policies.

We organised our next SICEE meeting in Sofia, Bulgaria, on 14-15 June of this year. The gathering, hosted by the Bulgarian Socialist Party, the Bulgarian Social Democrats and the Euro Left, included delegates from over thirty SI member parties and guest organisations, who focused their deliberations on the importance of European Union enlargement for Central and European countries and the importance of stability in the Balkans for all of Europe. The declaration adopted by the Committee urged the international community, particularly the European Union, NATO and the United Nations, to maintain strong commitments to securing peace and democracy in the Balkans,

and reaffirmed the International's position that the strengthening of social democracy in Russia, the CIS nations and the Caucasus was also essential.

Continuing with our extensive work in the Balkans, the International organised a meeting of leaders of our member parties in the region that was held in Tirana, Albania, on 5 September 2003. The gathering, hosted by the Socialist Party of Albania, led by Fatos Nano, Prime Minister of Albania, and the Social Democratic Party, focused on a number of issues, including Balkan-EU relations and the role and tasks of the social democratic movement in the region. In their statement, participants expressed our full support for European integration and the establishment of a clear roadmap toward EU membership for all Balkan countries, and emphasised the importance of strengthening the common cooperation and commitment of social democratic parties to ensure continued progress toward lasting peace and security in the region.

## **THE MEDITERRANEAN**

The Mediterranean is a diverse and critically important region where the International has continued its work to promote integration and enhanced cooperation, drawing on the diversity of our members and the dynamic interaction within our social democratic family to promote a partnership of nations that can overcome the inequality between North and South. The enormous complexity of the Euro-Mediterranean process requires constant commitment and political work, and the International remains firm in its efforts to keep it moving forward.

The SI Mediterranean Committee, with a growing number of SI member parties from across all the shores of the Mediterranean Sea, was established by the SI Council in Athens in 1993 and many of the ideas and proposals we have put forth have been reflected in the integration process formalised at the Barcelona Conference in 1995.

The Committee met in Palma de Mallorca on 1-2 December 2000, hosted by the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party, PSOE, whose delegation was led by Secretary General José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero. Delegates produced a working paper that assessed, five years after Barcelona, how to best overcome obstacles and delays in order to further the process toward achieving a Euro-Mediterranean partnership at all levels. Emphasis was placed on the International's belief in the need for 'a decisive political impulse' and greater political leadership throughout Europe and the Mediterranean to forge such a partnership.

Amid the concerns gripping the world after the 11 September attacks in the United States, the Mediterranean Committee met in Seville on 29-30 October 2001, hosted by PSOE. During the discussions participants underlined the sense of the International that such terrorist acts marked a new reality and that in response to such threats in an interdependent world there needed to be greater cooperation toward building 'a more just and balanced international society', as was stated in the Seville Declaration issued by the Committee upon completion of the meeting. In assessing the great challenges faced by the Mediterranean, the Committee also expressed the optimism of the International, noting that the region 'has been known as an arena for meeting and dialogue, as well as a source of inspiration for ideas of international order'.

The growing presence of the International in the Mediterranean region was evident when we organised a meeting of our SI Council in Casablanca on 31 May — 1 June 2002, hosted by the Socialist Union of Popular Forces, USFP, of Morocco, and its First Secretary Abderrahman Youssoufi, then Prime Minister of Morocco. The gathering focused on responses to violence in the post 11

September world and the need for a determined North-South effort in pursuit of peace, security and sustainable development.

The Mediterranean in the context of post-war Iraq was the main theme for discussion when we organised the next gathering of the Mediterranean Committee in Toledo on 9-10 May 2003, again hosted by PSOE. The meeting was chaired by Manuel Marín of PSOE, Chair of the Committee, and the principal theme was introduced by Felipe González, former Prime Minister of Spain, and Abderrahman Youssoufi.

The participants in Toledo examined the special position of the Mediterranean, underlining that the region was not only a meeting point of diverse cultures and people but also where the international community and the social democratic movement confronted major challenges and crises. The Toledo Declaration issued by the Committee reiterated our belief in the urgent need to recover the central role of the United Nations as a guarantor of peace and security, and to reform all multilateral institutions to ensure greater democracy, transparency and efficiency. It also reaffirmed our support for the efforts of UN Secretary-General Annan toward a settlement of the Cyprus situation based on the relevant UN resolutions, and our commitment to promoting a peaceful resolution to the crisis in Algeria 'to give the Algerian people the freedom to control their own destiny and the means to build a democratic future'.

With the approach of our Congress, the Mediterranean Committee gathered in Split on 10-11 October. The meeting, hosted by the SI member party in Croatia, the Social Democratic Party, was again chaired by Manuel Marín. Representatives of SI parties noted that despite the crises and serious challenges facing the region, the Mediterranean was strengthened not only by the richness of its cultures, languages, religions and traditions, but also by the openness of its people to greater cooperation and integration. The Declaration of Split agreed by the delegates reaffirmed our commitment to supporting the Euro-Mediterranean process as the best framework to advance on economic, cultural and, especially, political cooperation between the nations of the region, based on dialogue and building mutual confidence.

## **ADVANCING OUR GLOBAL AGENDA**

### **Economy, Social Cohesion and the Environment**

Since our last Congress in Paris, and following on the adoption of our Platform for Global Progress by the SI Council in Maputo in November 2000, the International has continued working to turn the tide of globalisation in favor of the many who have yet to benefit. This has included the concerted efforts of our member parties in their home countries and at the regional and international levels, and of our Committee on the Economy, Social Cohesion and the Environment, the SI Working Group on the World Trade Organisation and the SI Working Group on the Kyoto Agreement.

Much of our work in helping to guide globalisation in a positive direction concentrated on two global initiatives, the International Conference on Financing for Development held in Monterrey in March 2002 and the World Summit on Sustainable Development, WSSD, the following August-September in Johannesburg. The position of the International on the issues involved in these crucial undertakings was the focus of the SI Committee on the Economy, Social Cohesion and the Environment during a number of its meetings, particularly its gathering at the headquarters of the United Nations in New York on 15-16 February 2002, chaired by Christoph Zöpel of the Social Democratic Party of Germany,



Chair of the Committee. Our work on this continued at the SI Council in Casablanca on 31 May - 1 June 2002, when we centered our discussions. On the theme 'From Monterrey to Johannesburg', we reiterated our support for the New Partnership for Africa's Development, NEPAD, and issued a Declaration in support of the WSSD that reaffirmed democratic global governance and global sustainability as goals of social democracy worldwide.

On the occasion of the Summit in Johannesburg our President addressed a letter to leaders of the International, calling for a new effort by social democrats to integrate economic, social and environmental concerns and emphasising that the Summit afforded an important opportunity to set the foundation of a 'New Global Partnership' for sustainable development.

We organised a major presence of the International at the Summit, as well as a number of activities in which I had the opportunity to participate together with delegates of numerous SI member parties from around the world. We met with a number of ministers of the South African government and leading figures of the African National Congress, ANC, at a special gathering organised by the party to welcome us. SI representatives joined the activities of national delegations, were among participants at NGO forums, took part in meetings of parliamentarians and other groups and followed the proceedings of the Summit. Discussions were also held with Jan Pronk, the Special Envoy of the UN Secretary-General to the Summit.

To evaluate the outcome of the Summit, the SI Committee on the Economy, Social Cohesion and the Environment gathered in Geneva at the headquarters of the International Labour Organisation, ILO, on 13-14 December 2002. Participants included Larry Kohler, representing the Director-General of the ILO Juan Somovía, and Mike Moore, former Director-General of the WTO. With an eye toward the SI Council in Rome the following month, the Committee agreed a Statement on the Summit that welcomed the new impetus to global action to fight poverty and protect the environment, but regretted the less than hoped for results with regard to global governance and other issues.

When the SI Council met in Rome on 20-21 January of this year, hosted by our two member parties in Italy, the Democrats of the Left, DS, led by Piero Fassino, and the Italian Democratic Socialists, SDI, led by Enrico Boselli, a principal theme of the gathering was 'For a More Equal Society: Governance, Sustainability, Social Justice'. Following detailed discussions we adopted a Declaration on the World Economy that focused on the various regions of the world and the difficulties arising from a number of factors including the crisis in Iraq, and a Declaration on Global Policy 2003 that emphasised the need to address the digital divide that has left much of the world technologically disconnected. In this regard, I represented the International in Divonne-les-Bain, France, on 12 December 2002, at the UN Conference held preparatory to the World Summit on the Information Society, whose first phase is scheduled for 10-12 December this year in Geneva, with the second in 2005 in Tunis. The digital divide is already high on our agenda and the upcoming Summit will be a focus of our attention.

At the Rome Council the International also sent a 'Message to the World Social Forum in Porto Alegre and the World Economic Forum in Davos', both of which were about to get underway. We called for a revival of 'the great causes and the great values' and reaffirmed our commitment, particularly in the context of globalisation, to peace and justice, underlining that one cannot exist without the other. And we urged the world to embrace a 'global deal' based on concrete policies, such a canceling the debt of the poorest countries, one of our International's four campaigns, and greater international efforts that would serve to rectify social and economic inequities.

The cancellation of the debt was a particular focus when representatives of SI member parties, NGO delegates, experts and other guests gathered in Paris on 5 October 2001 for a special one-day event

hosted by the Socialist Party, PS. During workshops and a round table chaired by François Hollande, First Secretary of the PS, participants agreed that debt cancellation was crucial for development in many parts of the world. The SI Executive, meeting in Paris, then issued a statement that emphasised that resolving the debt of developing countries was a principal test of global solidarity in the new millennium, that cancellation 'must be seen in the clear political perspective of financing development'.

As part of the effort of our International to shape the ongoing debate on global issues, the SI Committee on the Economy, Social Cohesion and the Environment has gathered regularly in the various regions of the world, assessing conditions, conducting research, consulting with international agencies and preparing papers to further our work. Since Paris we have organised meetings of the Committee in Berlin, Casablanca and Mexico City, where the main theme was 'Bridges across the digital divide: the role of education in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. We also organised meetings at the UN headquarters in New York, at the ILO headquarters in Geneva, at the headquarters of the World Bank in Washington DC, where top officials of that institution participated in the discussions, and most recently again at the ILO headquarters on 3-4 October. Based on this program of work the Committee has prepared a detailed draft document, 'Governance in a Global Society - The Social Democratic Approach', which we will discuss at our Congress.

On 30 May of this year the International organised in Washington DC a one-day informal discussion in which SI President Guterres, Poul Nyrup Rasmussen, former Prime Minister of Denmark and currently rapporteur to the Party of European Socialists on globalisation, Christoph Zöpel, former minister of Portugal Maria João Rodrigues and myself met with a number of senior officials associated with the work of the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the ILO, the World Trade Organisation, the UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean and the Inter-American Development Bank. This very fruitful informal dialogue formed part of our ongoing effort to develop new approaches to global governance and defining a new international architecture.

### **The World Trade Organisation**

Few phenomena have affected ordinary people everywhere as much as the accelerated expansion of global trade. This has always been a major concern of the International, particularly with the founding of the World Trade Organisation, WTO, and the increasing inequities inherent in current global trading arrangements. At our Council in Brussels in April 2000 the International therefore established the SI Working Group on the World Trade Organisation to closely follow the operations of the WTO and to propose reforms to its structures, especially with regard to the introduction of a social dimension, in conjunction with the work of our Committee on the Economy, Social Cohesion and the Environment.

The Committee, the Working Group on the WTO, whose Chair is Foreign Minister Erkki Tuomioja of the Finnish Social Democratic Party, and SI member parties on each continent have contributed in a number of ways to the efforts of our International to promote a dynamic but more balanced, transparent and democratic trading system. A particular focus has been on the Doha agreement in 2001 that launched a new global round of multilateral trade negotiations. Following on the work of the Working Group at its meetings in Maputo at the time of our Council in November 2000 and in London in April 2001, our International adopted two important resolutions. In the first, at the SI Council in Lisbon in June 2001, we reaffirmed our belief that 'the WTO remains the organisation with the best potential for managing trade related aspects of globalisation and for spreading the benefits

to marginalised groups and peoples in the world', and that to realise this potential 'the WTO should be reformed and enhanced as a forum for progressive trade liberalisation'. In the second, at the Council in Santo Domingo in November 2001, we reiterated our commitment to making Doha a round 'that can rightly be called the Development Round'.

In 2003 the International carried out a number of activities to help contribute to the 5<sup>th</sup> WTO Ministerial Conference held in Cancún on 10-14 September for the purpose of advancing agreements on key issues of the Doha Round. Discussions between our member parties, particularly those participating directly in the SI Working Group on the WTO, led to the preparation of an SI Statement, issued just prior to Cancún, that detailed our position in favour of fairer trade, equitable and sustainable development, respect for workers' rights and a more open and democratically accountable WTO.

On the eve of the Ministerial Conference, representatives of SI member parties from different regions of the world met in Cancún, along with leaders of trade unions, to exchange views on the issues to be addressed at the Conference. Those at the gathering emphasised in a statement our position that 'the WTO must respond to the needs and expectations of the global majority who live in the world's developing countries', and urged the WTO to change the rules of agricultural trade through the elimination of subsidies and the opening up of markets to farm exports from the developing world, as this would create new possibilities for achieving progress on the other issues on the agenda.

Following the unfortunate collapse of the WTO talks some days later, the International expressed its regrets and called for steps to restore the trust necessary to get negotiations back on track. In this regard, we urged the industrialised countries to be more sensitive to the realities in the developing world and to be more willing to make concessions on the crucial issue of agriculture. Despite the disappointment of Cancún, the International believes that the need for a fairer distribution of the benefits of trade and a substantial reduction of poverty worldwide must not go unmet any longer, and will continue to advocate for less egoism and a more balanced approach so that the Doha Round can be completed in the limited time remaining.

### **The Kyoto Agreement**

The question of climate change has always been a priority of the Socialist International, and SI member parties from throughout the world contributed every step of the way, helping to overcome obstacles once thought insurmountable, to achieve support for the protocol to combat global warming that was agreed by most of the world's governments in Kyoto in 1997. In April 2000 the SI Council in Brussels established the Working Group on the Kyoto Agreement to carry out activities in support of the process within the framework of the SI Committee on the Economy, Social Cohesion and the Environment.

The International immediately declared as 'unacceptable' the abrupt decision by the United States in the spring of 2001 to withdraw from the Kyoto agreement, formally known as the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Washington's abandonment of the treaty was another example of unilateral behavior and the Socialist International added its voice to the global effort to keep Kyoto alive. In our statement issued on 3 April 2001, we said that we would not be deterred by the unfortunate turn in Washington and called upon all other signatories to the agreement, as well as all concerned non-governmental organisations, 'to make every possible endeavor to ensure that the objectives of the treaty are achieved. Now more than ever is the time

for revitalising and sustaining the global environmental effort'. We noted that Washington had cited economic reasons for its decision, but responded that the types of disasters forecast by scientists if climate change were not slowed could bankrupt nations and undermine the entire global economy.

A few months later, at our Council in Lisbon on 29-30 June 2001, the International adopted a Declaration, 'Towards Sustainable Development', that drew on the 'Platform for Global Progress' adopted at the SI Council in Maputo in November 2000 and followed on the work of our member parties, including during meetings of the SI Working Group on the Kyoto Agreement in Oslo in January 2001 and in London in June of that year. In the Declaration we identified global warming as the greatest threat to the environment, with poor countries suffering the most because they lack the technology and resources to meet the challenge, and called on all countries to work towards ratifying the Kyoto Protocol. We also emphasised that the International was well positioned to help advance the Kyoto process because of its presence throughout the developed and developing worlds and the need to build political bridges between North and South on combating climate change as well on other issues involving environmental protection.

Since then, support for Kyoto has been an integral part of the work of the International for sustainable development. In the 'Declaration on the World Summit on Sustainable Development' adopted by our Council in Casablanca on 31 May - 1 June 2002, we reiterated our call for all nations signatory to the protocol to complete the process of ratification, and called on the United States to reconsider its decision that had left it isolated in the world on the issue of global warming.

We repeated these calls in the Statement on the outcome of the summit issued by the SI Council in Rome on 20-21 January of this year. And, in a message sent by the Council to the World Social Forum in Porto Alegre and the World Economic Forum in Davos, we reiterated our proposal for the establishment of a World Environment Organisation as part of the United Nations system to promote the implementation of the Kyoto Protocol and other international agreements. As the threat of major environmental disruptions due to global warming looms ever greater, ratification by all nations involved will remain a central task of our movement.

## **Local Authorities**

Because direct contact with government occurs for most people at the municipal level, the International has continued with our efforts to improve local government, particularly in the context of the growing impact of globalisation. The local response to global trends is increasingly important as national governments find it ever more difficult to devise effective policies on their own and can benefit greatly from the contribution of citizens channeled through municipal institutions. As a central thrust of our work on this issue, the International therefore decided in 2000 to prepare a charter on local government that would elaborate the criteria for the rights and responsibilities of local authorities in a democratic society.

The effort has been carried out by SI member parties in various parts of the world and by our Committee on Local Affairs, chaired by Hermes Binner of the Popular Socialist Party, PSP, Mayor of Rosario, Argentina. We organised a meeting of the Committee in Rosario on 31 March - 1 April 2000, hosted by the PSP and the Radical Civic Union, UCR, in which delegates considered the best ways for local governments to promote job creation and to humanise the urban landscape. The Committee also gathered in Budapest on 24-25 October 2000, hosted by the Hungarian Socialist Party, MSzP, during which the Committee emphasised the principle, 'think globally, act locally', and developed a program of work for preparing the charter.

To advance with our work on the charter we organised a meeting of the Committee in Mexico City on 23-24 July 2001, hosted by the Party of Democratic Revolution, PRD, and the Institutional Revolutionary Party, PRI. Close to fifty delegates, including mayors and local authority representatives from Africa, Europe and Latin America, contributed to the discussion and adopted a declaration that advocated the incorporation of opinions of all citizens, men and women, in the planning, implementation and management of public policies. This fundamentally socialist approach would become a key point in the charter, as would our emphasis on indicators that truly assess people's quality of life, including life expectancy, infant mortality, access to education, health care, food and housing, as well as employment, public safety and environmental protection.

We were therefore quite proud when the III Socialist International World Conference of Mayors, which we organised in Athens on 7-9 December 2001, unanimously adopted the 'Charter for Cities Governed by Socialists', the culmination of years of work and coordinated SI activities involving mayors and other municipal leaders and local representatives from social democratic and labour parties around the world. The Conference, hosted by the Panhellenic Socialist Movement, PASOK, and chaired by Hermes Binner, was addressed by Prime Minister Costas Simitis, Leader of PASOK and a Vice-President of the International, and included the participation of municipal leaders from practically every continent, from Iztapalapa, Mexico, to Frameries, Belgium, from Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, to Limbe, Cameroon, among many others.

In Athens, working groups were formed to review the main elements of the final draft of the Charter, which was approved on the final day of the Conference following reports from the working groups and a final round of discussion among the delegates. The Charter provides a common framework for incorporating the values of social democracy into local governance, for 'rebuilding a sense of citizenship and planting the seeds of a fairer society characterised by greater solidarity'. The Charter also underlined local government as a principal promoter of inclusion and integration, and as an important force for sustainable development and resource management, which made it part of the International's overall contribution to the World Summit in Johannesburg.

### **Peace, Democracy and Human Rights**

These are values that have been at the core of our organisation since the beginning of the International and throughout its expansion to practically every corner of the world. Our support for the peaceful resolution of conflicts, the promotion of democracy and the protection of human rights has been a principal, underlying theme of virtually every aspect of our work, since the days of the cold war to the era of today when we confront new threats and challenges. So it was that the International on 11 September 2001 condemned in the strongest possible terms the terrorist attacks carried out in the United States, which we described as 'an assault on the entire world democratic community', reiterated our abhorrence of terrorism and expressed our full solidarity with all the women and men in grief in the United States and around the world as a result of such barbarous crimes.

Interpreting the new and various forms of violence and the roots of conflict in the world have always been part of the work of our International, including in the work of our regional committees and of the SI Committee on Peace, Democracy and Human Rights established by the SI Council in Brussels in April 2000. We organised the first gathering of the Committee in Prague on 16-17 October 2000, hosted by the Czech Social Democratic Party, CSSD, and then Prime Minister Milos Zeman, Chair of the Committee, to address 'The Nature of Conflict in a Changing World', and to examine ways to enhance the role of the United Nations in conflict resolution. Following on the meeting and at the

request of the Chair, I presented to the Committee in June 2001 a broad assessment of the new nature of conflict entitled 'Perspectives on Conflict and Securing Peace', which provided a framework for surveying the various forms of conflict in the different regions of the world, with a particular focus on ethnic and racial strife and the need to guarantee minority rights to prevent it.

We convened another meeting of the Committee on Peace, Democracy and Human Rights on 24-25 January 2002 in Geneva, at the Palais des Nations, United Nations. Participants considered the question of 'Conflict prevention and conflict resolution', assessed the status of regional conflicts around the world and underlined the importance of strengthening the mechanisms for preventive diplomacy.

On 17-19 April 2002 the Socialist International undertook a mission to promote democracy and human rights in Belarus and to express our solidarity with social democratic and other pro-democracy forces operating under the difficult circumstances of authoritarian rule in that country. The members of the mission were Milos Zeman, Urban Ahlin of the Swedish Social Democratic Party, SAP, and Chair of the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the Swedish Parliament, and myself. We organised meetings with leaders of the SI member Belarusian Social Democratic Party (Narodnaya Hramada), BSDP, the Consultative Council of opposition political parties, leaders of trade union organisations, members of analytical and research centers, representatives of non-governmental organisations, editors-in-chief of Belarusian media and other journalists, and reaffirmed the support of the International for their efforts.

In line with the work of work International on behalf of human rights, I represented our organisation at a meeting in Geneva in February 2001 with then UN High Commissioner on Human Rights Mary Robinson, also attended by representatives of the other international political organisations.

I can also report that in support of democracy and free and fair elections, the International organised observer missions to Chile in December 1999 and January 2000 for the first and second rounds of voting in which Ricardo Lagos of our SI family and candidate of the Concertación de Partidos por la Democracia was elected President, and to the Dominican Republic in May 2000, when Hipólito Mejía of the SI member Dominican Revolutionary Party, PRD, was elected President.

In September 2001, I had the opportunity to observe the general elections in East Timor, held under the auspices of the United Nations, along with strong delegations from the SI members Australian Labour Party, ALP, and the New Zealand Labour Party, NZLP. After so many years of the International's support for independence based on democracy in East Timor, it was gratifying for all of us to see the high turnout in the vote won by our friends in Fretilin, East Timor's principal liberation movement.

I was also able to be in Costa Rica in February 2002 when Rolando Araya, leader of SI member National Liberation Party, was running for president, and in Morocco for the parliamentary elections in September 2002, as the USFP remained one of the top political parties in the country following the vote.

## **TOWARD A NEW INTERNATIONALISM**

In São Paulo we are underlining that the world has changed and needs to be organised differently. During the period covered by this report, I have seen that the Socialist International can help guide the way.

As our family has grown we have - through our missions, meetings, appeals and other initiatives - extended our influence, enhancing the interaction and cooperation between our growing number of member parties and making a difference.

Today more than ever social democracy and our International are a presence and a voice wherever and whenever injustice and inequality push people aside or leave them out altogether.

We are therefore obligated to empower ourselves so that we can do more, in our parties, within our movement and as we work toward a fair, effective and transparent framework for global governance, for globalisation governed by the people.

The solidarity that binds us together and brings others into our movement every day is what gives us strength, unity and global reach. In the same way, the values we embrace can be the connective tissue of a new global architecture.

This is the foundation of the new internationalism our troubled world so urgently needs and we are committed to keeping it moving forward and making it work.

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