



SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL

**ACTIVITIES AND STATEMENTS
OF THE
SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL**

**From the New York Council in July 2015
to the Luanda Council in November 2015**



SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL

SI solidarity with Mali and President Keita following terrorist attack in Bamako

20 NOVEMBER 2015

The Socialist International is deeply saddened by the barbarous terrorist attack in Bamako early this morning, which has resulted in the death of numerous civilians in a hotel in the capital. Our heartfelt thoughts and condolences are with all those who are suffering and grieving as a result of this cowardly act of terror against innocent people with no chance to defend themselves.

This attack is also an attack against democracy and against the efforts of the government and people of Mali to move the country forward. President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita is a leader that has made us all proud in our International, for his statesmanship, courage and commitment to securing a way forward for peace, democracy and economic progress for all the people of Mali.

While expressing our solidarity with the President and his government, and full support for our member parties in that country, the RPM and ADEMA-PASJ, we underline once again the need for and importance of a comprehensive, united and decisive response by the international community to terrorism, to bring an end to these crimes which have hit so many innocent people in so many places of the world.

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Socialist International condemns terrorist attacks in Paris

14 NOVEMBER 2015

The Socialist International is deeply shocked and saddened by the horrific multiple terrorist attacks carried out last night in Paris by ISIS, which have left 129 dead and many injured. We send our heartfelt condolences to the families and friends of the victims, our sympathy to all those who endured this heinous crime, and our solidarity with the entire French nation as it comes to terms with these events.

The Socialist International underscores its firm support for and solidarity with President Hollande and his government as he firmly and decisively acts to confront this concerted scourge of terror that has hit France, and takes the necessary measures to protect its citizens.

This despicable act of terror in Paris is an attack against peace-loving people everywhere and against the values common to open, democratic societies which respect the freedoms and rights of all, irrespective of race or religion.

In the Socialist International we stand together with the French people today, as we stand, shoulder to shoulder, against terror and disregard for human life and in defence of universal human rights and the values that unite civilizations the world over.

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SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL

Socialist International congratulates San Suu Kyi and NLD on historic election results

13 NOVEMBER 2015

The Socialist International warmly congratulates Aung San Suu Kyi and the National League for Democracy, NLD, on their historic victory following general elections held in Myanmar on 8 November. The results of these elections, in which close to 30 million people were eligible to vote, already show that with 80% of the contested seats now declared, the NLD have more than the two thirds needed to choose the President and put an end to more than 50 years of military rule.

These elections, despite the role and influence of the military, has been seen as the first openly contested poll in Myanmar in twenty five years, when the NLD won by a large majority in national elections in 1990 but Aung San Suu Kyi was prevented from taking office by the military and spent several long periods under house arrest, which only ended in 2010.

In the parliament, a quarter of the seats are automatically held by the military, in accordance with the existing constitution, which also does not allow San Suu Kyi to become President because it bars those who have foreign spouses or off-spring to assume that function. Nevertheless, Aung San Suu Kyi has declared that she will lead the government, as the leader of the winning party.

The Socialist International welcomes the statements made by both Myanmar's current president and army chief to the effect that the government would respect the poll results and we hope that they will respond positively to the call made by San Suu Kyi to them and to the speaker of the lower house, to hold joint talks "to implement the people's will in a peaceful manner", once the final results are declared on 22 November.

Throughout the last twenty five years, the Socialist International has stood firm alongside the National League for Democracy and its leader Aung San Suu Kyi in their struggle for democracy in the country, and the NLD has been represented in many SI activities over the years.

In the time ahead, the Socialist International will continue to attentively follow developments in Myanmar, supporting all efforts towards the full implementation of democracy, as expressed by the great majority of the population.



[Conference on social democracy](#) in Kathmandu with Aung San Suu Kyi, Prime Minister of Nepal, Sushil Koirala, from the SI member party Nepali Congress; the Chair of the SI Asia-Pacific Committee, Sher Bahadur Deuba, and the SI Secretary General, Luis Ayala.

SI COMMITTEES

IMAGES (26)

IMAGES



MEDITERRANEAN



Meeting of the SI Mediterranean Committee, Barcelona, Spain

26-27 OCTOBER 2015



Latifa Perry

On 26-27 October 2015, the SI Mediterranean Committee convened in Barcelona, Spain, under the heading **“For an end to conflicts – For peace in the Mediterranean”**, hosted by the SI member party in that country, the PSOE.

The Committee’s discussions focused on three aspects of the main theme: 1) Addressing the human tragedy with humane solutions; 2) Developing and promoting political initiatives; and 3) Advocating and rebuilding regional cooperation.

Opening the meeting, the Committee chair, Carme Chacón (PSOE, Spain) warmly welcomed all participants to Barcelona, the city that connects Spain with the Mediterranean and which is itself a mixture of cultures. She spoke of one of the worst crises faced by the region, that of refugees fleeing conflict, who needed urgent assistance. It was equally incumbent on us all to do everything possible to stabilise the situation in the areas of conflict both to achieve peace and progress in the region and to enable the millions displaced to return home. She highlighted the need to recapture the spirit of dialogue that had led to the Barcelona process of 1995, for greater efforts to be deployed to redress the inequality that exists on both shores of the Mediterranean, and for true multilateral action based on an equal footing.

During the opening session, the SI Secretary General commented on the increase in conflicts in the Mediterranean region that have led to the current humanitarian crisis, conflicts also resulting from inaction in the face of inequality, bad governance and lack of democracy. The hesitation shown by governments in Europe in dealing with what is in effect a 1% of the global figure of refugees and forcibly displaced persons was lamentable. We look back with nostalgia at the concept of regional cooperation encapsulated in the Barcelona Project of 20 years ago, but lessons needed to be learned and a new diagnostic had to be made, with new goals and new approaches. Today we were experiencing a deficit of tolerance and cooperation which we needed to counter by more visibly promoting the political values we stand for in our International.

As an introductory speaker on **“Addressing the human tragedy with humane solutions”**, Umut Oran from the CHP, Turkey, a Vice-President of the SI, described the open door policy of Turkey since 2013, which today hosted over two million Syrian refugees. This had coincided with an increase in economic problems in Turkey, however free health care was provided. The lack of schooling led to unacceptable human conditions such as child labour, early marriage and street begging, and the informal Syrian work force increased tensions with the local population. The government was failing to deal with the problems due to the lack of a coherent refugee policy or long-term perspective, although it was clear that the conflict in Syria would not end any time soon. He underlined the global nature of the crisis and the consequent need for a global response.

On the question of migrations, the Committee also heard a contribution from Moavia Achament Mochamentin, a native of Sudan today working at the head of the Greek Forum for Migrants, who described the local conditions faced by migrants upon arrival in Lesbos and pointed out that 80% of the workers there were volunteers. The volume of migrants was greater than portrayed by the media and was growing, medical treatment was almost non-existent and there was scarce food and shelter. He described the tensions between the refugees themselves which fell mainly in two camps, the Arab and the non-Arab speakers. The situation was out of control, the flow of refugees was increasing too rapidly for institutions to respond to, and there was no sign of the situation improving.

During the discussions, participants highlighted the realities concerning refugees fleeing past and present conflicts experienced in various countries of the region, including Syria, Egypt, Lebanon, Cyprus, Israel, Palestine, Tunisia, Greece, Western Sahara and Morocco. The role and duty of social democrats was underlined in facing the rising xenophobia and the extremist approaches to this issue in some EU countries, as was the imperative of addressing the underlying political problems that lead to conflict and the need to foster internal dialogue. Looking ahead, the importance of providing education for refugees as a preventive measure against radicalisation and organised crime was also noted.

In this context, SI Vice-President Ahmed Ould Daddah, leader of the RFD Mauritania, pointed out that the issue of refugees was nothing new in the history of human existence. Today the responsibility lay with those governments that have failed to create reliable democracies and economic development, and with the big powers who supported them for their own interest. If we don't change the methods and the goals, we will be crying crocodile tears. We should leave the beaten path and speak openly about the origins of the crises to address the true causes.

The second sub-theme of “**Developing and promoting political initiatives**” was introduced by Mustapha Ben Jaafar, leader of Ettakatol, Tunisia, and an Honorary President of the SI, who underlined the need to go back to the central ideas of the Barcelona project for peace, security and shared prosperity, as outlined by this committee at that time. That Process had led nowhere, as all efforts had concentrated on commercial projects, leaving aside the politics, in order to avoid differences. He highlighted the positive things about the recent Tunisian experience while noting the difficulties faced. Civil society involvement had led to the current progressive situation based on consensus but vigilance was required to ensure democracy.

The longstanding unresolved conflicts in the region, along with the more recent ones, were addressed, and the Committee heard valuable contributions from participants from both Palestine and Israel and from representatives from both communities in Cyprus. In relation to the situation of Western Sahara, the Committee followed up on the report by the SI Mission that was presented to the last SI Council.

Introducing the third sub-theme “**Advocating and rebuilding regional cooperation**”, Mohamed Abdelkader of the USFP, Morocco, observed that the Mediterranean was a longstanding area of rivalry between super powers and conflicts contained for decades had returned with great violence. In the 20 years since the Barcelona Declaration the opposite of its purpose had been achieved and all efforts to integrate the Maghreb had failed. There was inequality and mistrust in the relations between the two shores. The non-resolution of old conflicts remained an obstacle to progress, and security in the region would only be achieved with a tangible improvement in the lives and welfare of the people. He proposed the creation of a task force to define our vision and provide a common reference framework.

Participants at the meeting also had the opportunity to share information on the internal situation in their respective countries and parties: on the work of the PSD in Andorra, the situation in Egypt following the elections, the prospects for overcoming the conflict in Syria, the political situation in Palestine and preparations for the forthcoming Fatah Congress, the internal situation in Israel on the 20th anniversary of assassination of Yitzak Rabin, the current situation in Cyprus, in Lebanon, and latest developments in Tunisia.

Before the conclusion of the meeting, the Secretary General informed the committee of the news he had just received from Ramallah of a knife attack on Mustapha Barghouti. He would convey the sentiments of solidarity of the committee members.

Following the debates, the Committee adopted a **Declaration** “Building Peace and Responses to the Refugee Crisis”, reflecting the points discussed and views shared by all participants.

BARCELONA DECLARATION:

BUILDING PEACE AND RESPONSES TO THE REFUGEE CRISIS

Democratic socialist parties from the Mediterranean region gathered for a meeting of the Socialist International Mediterranean Committee in the city of Barcelona on 26 and 27 October 2015, under the heading 'For an end to conflicts – For peace in the Mediterranean.'

This meeting takes place at a crucial moment for the Euro-Mediterranean region for three reasons. Firstly, it is the 20th anniversary of the Barcelona Declaration, the founding document of a project of co-operation between the EU and the twelve countries on the southern shore of the Mediterranean. Secondly, the grave refugee crisis that has been afflicting our region in recent months calls for urgent and effective solutions to contain the greatest humanitarian crisis since the Second World War, and thirdly, because of the number and complexity of the open conflicts that are causing deaths and the displacement of people in a several of countries of the region.

As Mediterranean socialists, we recognise that the creation of the Barcelona Process at the 1995 Euro-Mediterranean Conference, and subsequently the Union for the Mediterranean, were important initiatives at their respective times which helped establish a forum for political dialogue and social and economic co-operation in a complex region. However, the problems and crises in different parts of this region obstruct these initiatives, although the Mediterranean Committee continues to consider them absolutely necessary for dealing in a concerted manner with the challenges that confront us.

The Mediterranean is experiencing one of the worst crises in its history: the refugee crisis. Hundreds of thousands have arrived in Europe after crossing Mare Nostrum, fleeing from war and torture in their countries of origin. Many of them have lost their lives in the attempt or have disappeared in its waters. It is a human and humanitarian tragedy, in the face of which we, as socialists, cannot and must not stand aside with folded arms. We understand that we must attend to the needs of those who have justified reasons for seeking asylum in Europe, while at the same time we must try to remove the root causes of the problem: the war in Syria which has been going on for more than five years, the barbaric terrorism of Daesh/ISIS, the lack of democracy and bad governance in many countries that inhibits the opportunities and prospects of the young people of the region.

Our priority is the achievement of three aims: peace and stability, democratisation, and prosperity. Our region's potential is weighed down by different conflicts, some of which are long-standing and still without resolution, like that of Israel and Palestine, the division of Cyprus or the question of Western Sahara, and others that are more recent, like Libya and Syria. We consider it necessary to continue working together, on an equal footing, to advance political initiatives that would lead to peace in our region, through regional co-operation, political dialogue and a global vision that goes beyond questions of security.

On the other hand, we want governments on both shores of the Mediterranean that are committed to the democratic principles of the Rule of Law, free, transparent and honest elections in every country, and full respect for basic rights and public freedoms.

In turn, we also have to press for actions to promote prosperity and redistribution in our countries, through co-operation for development, including social and business initiatives.

To achieve this, the member parties of the Socialist International Mediterranean Committee propose the following measures and actions to confront the refugee crisis and to move forward with the peaceful resolution of the conflicts in the region:

1. We call for an effective and collective response from the European Union to the arrival of the refugees: all the member States must fulfil their commitments and deal more rapidly with the redistribution of asylum claims. This is an ethical responsibility that must be taken up in order to be consistent with the defence of human rights and fundamental freedoms. The EU must show solidarity in supporting countries like Greece, which is currently suffering a double crisis: economic and humanitarian.
2. We condemn the violations of human rights and legal obligations by States in connection with this crisis – and ask the European Union and the international community to be forceful in their vigilance. We commit ourselves to fighting against the mafias involved in human trafficking and those parties whose xenophobic and anti-immigrant discourses are inflaming European societies.
3. We believe it necessary to give support to the refugees in the countries that border on the Syrian war,

especially those in Turkey, where the majority of are, but also those in Lebanon and Jordan. Large-scale resources are needed to run the refugee camps, as well as to guarantee the provision of education to all those young people who have had to flee their countries, because it is the best weapon against radicalisation.

4. We ask the international community to engage in direct, collective action to halt the war in Syria and to search for a way to bring peace and stability to the country, so as to allow a return to the logic of politics, urgently beginning a transition to democracy that will allow the refugees to return to their homes. We appreciate and value all those forces struggling on the ground against the barbarous terrorism of the so-called 'Islamic State'.
5. This Committee is very concerned at the current political situation in Egypt following the last parliamentary elections and at the governmental repression of political parties and civil society. Similarly, we value and support the efforts of our sister party the ESDP in their struggle to establish a genuine and inclusive democracy in the country.
6. We are closely following the current efforts to bring an end to the division of the island of Cyprus, and consider of great importance the confidence-building and other measures based on our principles and values and the resolutions of the United Nations to reach a solution to the problem of Cyprus.
7. We express our deepest concern over the escalation of violence in Israel and Palestine, and regret the absence of a meaningful diplomatic process leading to the recognition of the State of Palestine within the 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital. We call on the parties to halt all violence and to re-engage in constructive dialogue for a just and lasting solution to this conflict, based on the Declaration adopted by the Socialist International Council in New York in July 2015. In this regard, the Committee has decided to initiate contacts with the Democratic Party in the United States, as a privileged interlocutor, to explore ways in which we can collaborate to bring this solution forward.
8. We intend to continue working with our member parties to promote a solution to the question of Western Sahara, in a constructive spirit and using ideas from the report of the Socialist International Mission that took place in May of this year - a report that was approved by broad consensus - in the search for a political solution within the framework defined by the United Nations.
9. We welcome the agreement to form a transitional government of unity in Libya, sponsored by the representative of the United Nations Secretary General, and we express our support for the EU and the international community so that they try to consolidate reconciliation in a key country of the region in a serious, staunch and constructive way.
10. We applaud the award of the Nobel Peace Prize to the Tunisian National Dialogue Quartet, in recognition of the all the Tunisians and political forces of the country who demonstrated that it has been possible to initiate a transition to democracy through dialogue and negotiation. However, this process is still fragile and we in this Committee call on all progressive forces and those in civil society to be vigilant in the face of attempts to go back on the successes achieved in the revolution and the Constitution.

Lastly, the member parties in this Committee wish to recall the spirit that 20 years ago launched the Barcelona Process, and we consider that, despite all the difficulties involved, it is necessary to return to the basic ideas of peace, stability and prosperity shared by countries on both shores of the Mediterranean, in order to put an end to the conflicts and inequalities, and to be able to offer a present and better future for our citizens.



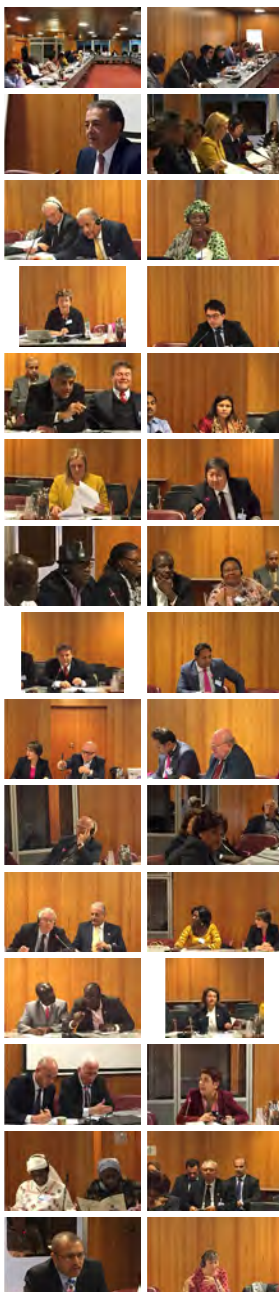
IPU

SI Meeting at the 133rd Assembly of the IPU in Geneva

18 OCTOBER 2015

IMAGES (33)

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During the 133rd Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) held in Geneva from 18 to 21 October, the Socialist International held its regular meeting of parliamentarians belonging to SI member parties to exchange views on the main issues on the agenda of the IPU, and to share information on developments within their own countries.

Parliamentarians from SI member parties in Angola, Belgium, Czech Republic, Dominican Republic, Finland, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Hungary, India, Iraq, Italy, Mali, Mauritius, Mongolia, Morocco, Namibia, Niger, Pakistan, Palestine, Romania, San Marino, South Africa, Spain and the United Kingdom, attended the meeting, as well as from Sri Lanka as guests.

The dominant theme of this Assembly's discussions was that of Migrations and how to implement a fairer and more humane way of dealing with this phenomenon. The emergency item of debate also focused on the protection of refugees and ensuring compliance with international and humanitarian law. The SI Secretary General, who chaired the SI meeting, recalled the extensive discussions on these issues that had been taking place at different levels within our International and made specific reference to the Charter for the Rights of Migrants that had been elaborated by the SI Committee on Migrations and adopted by the SI Council at its last meeting in July 2015. In the discussions on these issues, participants highlighted different aspects from their national perspectives. A common thread in the contributions was that whether dealing with regular migration, which was a constant, or with refugees, what we were dealing with in essence was human beings and it was the responsibility of all governments to protect them and to respect their dignity. Particular attention was paid to the plight of the most vulnerable, including women and children.

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The need to tackle the root causes of mass migration and growing numbers of internally displaced people and refugees was emphasised and a call was made for more decisive and effective action by governments and international bodies to achieve fair and lasting solutions not only in regard to conflict resolution, but also in the fight against poverty and unemployment.

Another aspect that was highlighted, related to ensuring respect for the general rules of labour laws. In relation to migrants and refugees, it was pointed out that issues surrounding the right to work, exploitation of domestic labour, women and children needed to be further addressed, as well as trade union rights for migrants.

Among the reports on national situations, the meeting heard from the Palestinian representative on the

deteriorating situation between Palestine and Israel, and from the chairman of the IPU's Middle East Committee. Here again the underlying causes of the conflict were highlighted as fundamental issues that could only be resolved with the equal will and commitment of both sides.

Participants also received a report on the worrying situation in Iraq from the head of the PUK delegation in the Iraqi parliament, who underlined the need for international solidarity. The country was struggling to cope with the threat of ISIS, it had four million internally displaced people and women and girls were being kidnapped and trafficked in growing numbers.

The meeting also welcomed a report on the recent elections in Guinea, which saw the return to power of President Alpha Condé at the head of the second democratic government of that country.

At the conclusion of the meeting, emphasis was put on the importance of international bodies in bringing people together and promoting common solutions. In the SI we stood for multilateralism and solidarity. Also stressed was the need for more politics, which was about values and ideals, which were in deficit today in many places around the world.

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Return of Manuel Rosales, leader of the UNT Party, to Venezuela

15 OCTOBER 2015

The Socialist International is closely following the return today of Manuel Rosales, leader of *Un Nuevo Tiempo* (UNT), to Venezuela. The ex-presidential candidate is flying this afternoon from the Island of Aruba to the city of Maracaibo, capital of the State of Zulia, where Rosales served as its former Governor, thus putting an end to his six years in exile.

The Socialist International expresses solidarity with the decision of the leader of the UNT, one of its member parties in Venezuela. With his return, Manuel Rosales defends the fundamental right of all Venezuelans to live in their own country. He returns to Venezuela fully aware that he is affected by an open judicial process against him. The Socialist International demands once again the Venezuelan judicial authorities to respect and guarantee the due process of all those with open cases, or who are serving sentences for political reason in that country.

The Socialist International considers Manuel Rosales's decision to return as a new mark of the determination and efforts undertaken by the leaders and members of the opposition forces united together in the *Mesa de Unidad Democrática*, in order to achieve the realisation of free and just parliamentary elections on 6 December this year.

The Socialist International calls to respect the right of assembly and the freedom of speech of UNT militants, supporters of Manuel Rosales and citizens of Maracaibo, who have already announced their mobilisation on the occasion of the arrival of the opposition leader.

Press coverage

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The SI condemns the massive terrorist attack in Ankara and calls for a thorough investigation

12 OCTOBER 2015

The Socialist International strongly condemns the massive terrorist attack on a peaceful rally in Ankara that took place on Saturday 10 October, killing over a hundred people and injuring many more.

We extend our deepest sympathy to the families of the victims and our strong solidarity with all the people in Turkey who stand against violence and who remain committed to the democratic path, the defence of their freedoms and the enjoyment of their rights.

We equally stand alongside all those who embrace and defend the values we share with political actors in Turkey and, in particular, we extend our solidarity to the Turkish Republican Party, CHP, today in the opposition, and to the Peoples' Democratic Party, HDP, whose sympathisers have been targeted in this abhorrent attack.

At this hour of mourning, we wish the Turkish people courage and determination in placing peace at the centre of the nation's future, and keeping it safe from any attempt to destabilise it or derail it from its democratic path as they approach forthcoming elections scheduled for 1 November 2015. We call on the Turkish authorities for an exhaustive and transparent investigation to establish those who are behind this massacre.

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SI welcomes the adoption of the 2030 Agenda and Global Goals

27 SEPTEMBER 2015

At the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit, which took place this weekend in New York, member states adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and a new set of Global Goals. These Goals have the aim of ending extreme poverty, fighting inequality and injustice, and tackling climate change over the next fifteen years. The Socialist International and its member parties have made a fundamental commitment to the achievement of these objectives.

The SI has expressed its support for the post-2015 agenda, most recently from the United Nations headquarters on the occasion of its last Council meeting in July. The Council recognised the singular importance of 2015 in terms of development, and declared the Global Goals to be in line with the basic values of the global social democratic movement, calling on all countries to adopt the post-2015 agenda.

The Socialist International believes it is truly a time for global action, and the Global Goals are a vital step to ending poverty. This important statement of intent must be matched by actions, in particular in order to ensure access to finance for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Active engagement is needed to ensure that development, sustainability and security go hand in hand, making use of technological advances to deliver sustainable industrialisation that can remove the poverty and underdevelopment that contribute to insecurity and conflict in the world.

Equality is a crucial element of the platform of the SI and we see the urgent need to reduce inequality between and within countries as a core progressive principle. We also welcome all initiatives to achieve gender equality and end gender-based discrimination. Women's empowerment will require an end to violence against women, equal access to education and the elimination of poverty.

The success of the Global Goals also requires a willingness and ambition to tackle climate change, one of the biggest threats to the planet and its people. An ambitious and binding international commitment to address anthropogenic climate change is needed to halt and reverse the dire consequences we have already been witnessing across the globe, and for sustainable development, with preservation of the long-term future of the planet at its core. In this regard, the SI and its member parties will continue to work for a legally binding and universal agreement on climate change at COP21 in Paris.

Ending poverty, promoting equality and taking action on climate change have been central to the identity of the Socialist International, in line with three pillars of our movement's agenda, the economic, the social and the environmental. The adoption of these seventeen Global Goals should give us optimism, but must also be a spur to redouble our efforts and those of our member parties to make this a priority for our generation, in order to secure a brighter future for the generations to come.



Socialist International condemns military coup and the interruption of the process to democracy in Burkina Faso

17 SEPTEMBER 2015

The Socialist International vigorously condemns the military coup in Burkina Faso and the capture of interim President Michel Kafando, along with Prime Minister Isaac Zida and other members of the government, by the Presidential Security Regiment (RSP), an elite force set up by the former President Blaise Compaoré.

Our International calls for the immediate release of all those unlawfully detained, the restoration of the legitimate interim government, and the full resumption of the process towards the holding of free and fair elections scheduled for October 11.

Amid reports of heavy shooting overnight in the capital, Ouagadougou, and the presence in the streets of people protesting the military interruption of the transitional process to democracy, we remind the military forces behind this coup that international public opinion and institutions will hold them responsible for resulting casualties.

Burkina Faso must be allowed to join the community of democratic nations and put an end once and for all to the interference by the military in the political affairs of the country. The Socialist International extends its solidarity and full support to all the people of Burkina Faso mobilised for democracy and all the political democratic forces there working to this end.

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SI call for Solidarity and Political Action

14 SEPTEMBER 2015

The Socialist International calls on the EU to reach a speedy agreement on a fair and humane plan for accommodating the continuing flow of refugees and asylum seekers fleeing conflict zones. While it is important to recognise that this is an issue of global dimension and requires that countries from all continents assume their fair share of responsibility, it is crucial for Europe today to act in line with the values, the spirit of solidarity and of common progress upon which the EU was founded with the participation of our movement, and in keeping with its moral and legal obligations.

The current global displacement of tens of millions of human beings as a result of conflict, repression or hunger is a shared burden of humanity. However, a large part of this burden is presently borne disproportionately by poorer countries. The mass movement of people, as recent years have shown, is not abating. On the contrary, it has grown and continues to grow on an ever increasing scale. The ongoing conflicts affecting numerous countries of the Middle East are indications that this phenomenon has no end in sight. And the dire living conditions in the poorest parts of the world or where people are suffering from repression will lead to continued migration on a large scale for the foreseeable future.

At the SI Council meeting held at the UN in Geneva in December 2014 António Guterres, UN High Commissioner for Refugees and former President of the Socialist International, warned that the humanitarian system was reaching breaking point. He also stressed the crucial need to tackle the root causes that create humanitarian problems, which urgently needed to be addressed from a political perspective.

The Socialist International remains committed to promoting political solutions to this crisis, convinced that political action is the only way to achieve the conditions necessary for peace, democracy and equality. This position has been borne out at the numerous meetings of its Migrations Committee, its regional committees and its Councils, the most recent of which, held at the UN headquarters in New York, adopted unanimously a Charter for the Rights of Migrants, Refugees and Asylum Seekers to which all its member parties worldwide subscribe.

Today we reiterate our call made in April this year to all those with responsibility in Europe to act immediately and effectively, and as we said then: “Europe needs to act, if only to save itself, because no progress, economic wellbeing or a land of plenty can exist alongside want, fear or death.”



Socialist International protests against the sentencing of Leopoldo López

10 SEPTEMBER 2015

After a year and a half imprisoned in the Military Jail of Ramo Verde in the suburbs of Caracas, the Judicial Power of Venezuela passed sentence in the process against Leopoldo López, political leader in opposition to the government of Nicolás Maduro and Coordinator of Voluntad Popular (VP), a member party of the Socialist International. Today, the judge, Susana Barreiros, condemned López to a jail sentence of 13 years and nine months to be served in the same prison in which he has been detained since February 2014, under charges of being responsible for public incitement, unlawful association and setting fire to and damaging private property during the violent acts that took place in Caracas on 12 February 2014.

The Socialist International cannot but reject and deplore this arbitrary judicial decision. During the entire process we have kept very close to López, to his family, to his party and to the democratic forces in Venezuela. We have repeatedly condemned the constant violations of his rights throughout his trial, during which the guarantees of due process were permanently denied. From the beginning, we have denounced the political motivation behind the detention of Leopoldo López and his condition as a prisoner of conscience, and this sentence only reinforces our denunciations. Along with our firm voice, other voices have been raised from the United Nations, from governments, from serving and former heads of state or government, from parliaments and from different non-governmental organisations which defend human rights, as well as that of civil society organisations.

In the face of these developments, the Socialist International, along with strongly protesting against this sentence, decisively reaffirms today its commitment to remain mobilised in favour of the liberation of Leopoldo López and all the political prisoners in Venezuela and in favour of democracy in that country.

The election of representatives to the National Assembly that will take place on 6 December 2015 must be just and transparent and with the presence of international observers. Democracy is the only legitimate way to overcome the tensions, polarisation and serious economic and social crisis that today affects Venezuela.

We equally deeply regret the confrontations seen today outside the Palace of Justice in Caracas which left one person dead and numerous others injured, and express our hope for an immediate end to the violence.

We reiterate today our deep solidarity with the people of Venezuela in their efforts to achieve respect for the freedoms and rights of all its citizens and to overcome the difficult moments they are facing.

[Press coverage](#)

[Previous statements](#)

Resolution on Venezuela adopted by the SI Council in New York, 6-7 July, 2015

Venezuela: on the brink of reaching a point of no return?

20 FEBRUARY 2015

Resolution on Venezuela adopted by the SI Council in Geneva, 12-13 December 2014

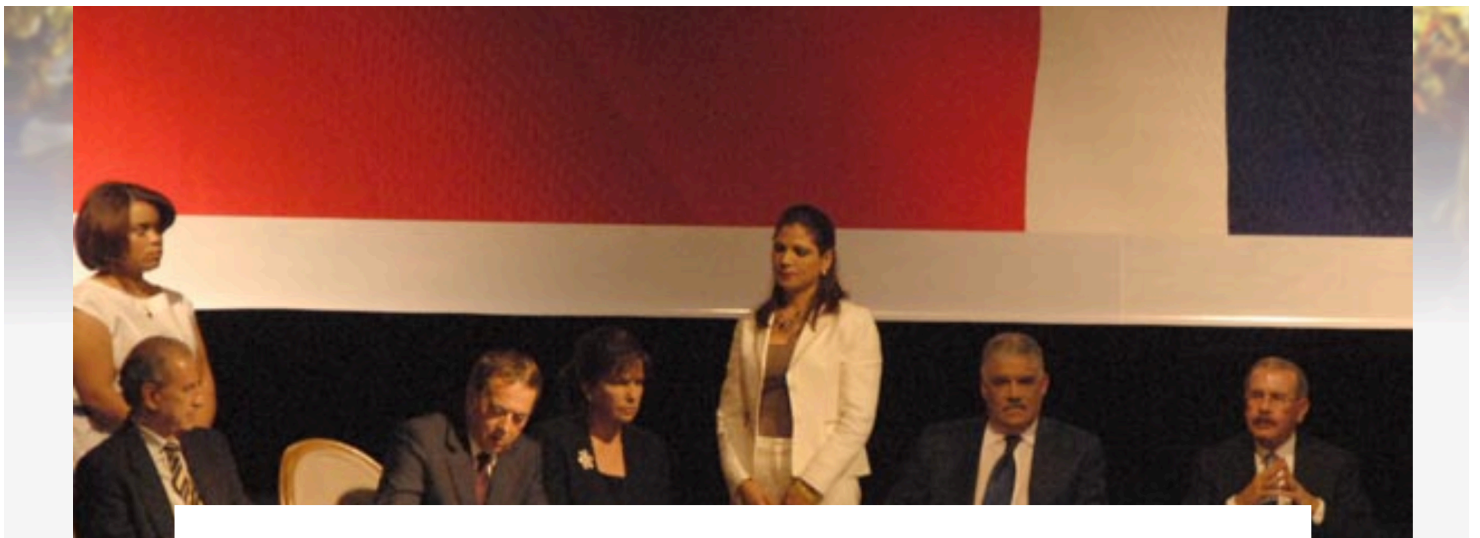
Socialist International envoys prevented from visiting Leopoldo López in prison in Venezuela

15 NOVEMBER 2014

Venezuela : for an end to the violence

17 FEBRUARY 2014

Informe de misión como Enviado Especial de la Internacional Socialista a Caracas, Venezuela, los días 13 a 16 de noviembre 2014



7 septiembre, 2015

PACTO TRASCENDENTE

LUIS AYALA: PACTO ESTÁ LLAMADO A TENER UNA GRAN CONSECUENCIA CON LA HISTORIA DE REPÚBLICA DOMINICANA

Luis Ayala, Secretario General de la Internacional Socialista (IS) destacó la importancia del acuerdo entre el Partido de la Liberación Dominicana y Revolucionario Dominicano el cual definió como una visita a la historia y un compromiso de la mayoría unida, para un mejor futuro del país.

El Secretario General de la IS quien rubricó como testigo del Acuerdo de Gobierno Compartido de Unidad Nacional, firmado por el presidente Danilo Medina, candidato presidencial del PLD en las elecciones del 2016 y el presidente del PRD, Miguel Vargas Maldonado, dijo sentirse contento de encontrarse en ese escenario por tratarse de acontecimiento histórico que expresa el cambio en la política dominicana.

“Esto tiene una enorme trascendencia donde dos partidos han tenido una capacidad de ponerse de acuerdo y poner en consonancia sus visiones” expresó Ayala en nota divulgada por el PLD, a través de la Secretaria de Comunicaciones.

En ese sentido, destaca que la creación de un gobierno de unidad nacional, significa que se está en un momento trascendente de la vida política y que los políticos firmantes transitan el camino de dos grandes estadistas que identifican los intereses de las organizaciones y se encaminan a trabajar unidos.

Luis Ayala dijo que ha confirmado un pacto representante de una coherencia ideológica, de ideales y de valores “y eso es muy importante porque la política es y será siempre eso”.

El político sostiene que el acuerdo entre los partidos Revolucionario y de la Liberación Dominicana está llamado a tener una gran consecuencia con la historia de República Dominicana.

“Hoy estamos en un momento en que lo trágico del recorrido de tanta lucha y tanta ilusión, de que el compromiso de dos hombres que representaron a millones y generaciones de dominicanos quedan bien plasmado en ese acuerdo político de hoy”, refiriéndose a los líderes de ambas organizaciones José Francisco Peña Gómez y Juan Bosch del PRD y PLD, respectivamente.

A juicio de Ayala, hoy se abre las perspectivas maravillosas par el pueblo dominicano porque hay una gran concertación nacional de hoy y para el futuro.

Apunta que en estos periodos difíciles de la política, cuando muchas veces están ausentes los ideales, es importante este tipo de acuerdo con el que dos partidos se reconstruyen, reconquistan y actúan juntos.

Destacó además que se está en un acuerdo se basa un aspecto fundamental de la democracia que es construir mayoría, generar alianza una forma de cumplir con la nación que favorece la diversidad de criterio y acciones políticas.

A juicio del secretario de la IS no se pueden en la actualidad, estar arrinconado en los pequeños espacios nuestras propias entidades políticas por muy consecuente que sea.

"Hoy día tenemos la obligación, si queremos avanzar en el progreso, si queremos avanzar en el cambio que le sirva a toda la gente. Tenemos la obligación de concertar, de generar las grandes mayorías para ser capaces de poner primero el interés de toda nuestra gente".

Agrega que lo ideal, tal y como se ha hecho, es poner primero lo que le interese a la gente y ser capaces de poner a los programas de los partidos y los compromisos de estos en una sola mesa.

"Aquí tenemos que reconocer la capacidad que ha tenido el presidente de la República con esta apertura y esta visión que refleja su capacidad de estadista".

Luis Ayala de la Internacional Socialista destacó que en el acuerdo PLD- PRD también queda reflejada la voluntad de Miguel Vargas Maldonado de quien también destacó su compromiso y visión.

"Así que querido compañeros, con coherencia, con ideas y valores, consecuente a la historia y con una visión de futuro creo que serán capaces de ganar la victoria".

SI COMMITTEES

LATIN AMERICA AND THE
CARIBBEAN

COLOMBIA

28-29 August 2015

IMAGES (52)

IMAGES



+22

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN



Meeting of the SI Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean in Colombia

28-29 AUGUST 2015



Latifa Perry

On August 28th and 29th, the Socialist International Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean convened in Cartagena de Indias, Colombia, hosted by the Partido Liberal Colombiano (Liberal Party of Colombia, PLC). The topics for discussion were 'Peace in Colombia – a common objective for people throughout the region and a necessity for progress for all' and 'The current electoral processes in Latin America and the Caribbean: perspectives and evaluations'. The member parties of the region also presented the Committee with reports on their national situations and their work in their respective countries.

At the opening of the meeting, the Committee had the opportunity to listen to the Colombian national anthem and other choral works performed by an ensemble of children from families which had been displaced from the zones stricken by the armed conflict that has affected Colombia for more than half a century. With 'Music for Reconciliation' emblazoned on their shirts, the ensemble gave expression to the hopes and desires invested by Colombian society in the peace process currently underway.

Subsequently, a [video](#) was shown: this had been made in March, 1990, when the guerrilla group 'April 19 Movement' (M19) and the Colombian government signed the agreement that allowed M19 to be demobilised and reintegrated into the social and political life of the country. This event, some 25 years ago, demonstrates the Socialist International's longstanding commitment to peace in Colombia, creating trust between the parties, furthering political dialogue, and putting together a Commission to supervise the surrender and destruction of the weapons held by M19.

During the opening session of the meeting, there were contributions from the Secretary General of the SI, Luis Ayala, from PLC leader Horacio Serpa, and from the chair of the SI Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean, Miguel Vargas Maldonado (PRD, Dominican Republic).

Luis Ayala began by thanking the Liberal Party (PLC) for their hospitality. Referring to the video, he reiterated that the ideals and values that inspired the SI 25 years ago were the same as those that motivate the organisation and its members today. He recalled that peace is a condition for those values to be embodied and realised, laying down weapons through political action. Likewise, he maintained, this meeting of the Committee in Cartagena de Indias has a special significance, being held at the same time as the peace process between the Colombian government and the FARC was making progress in Havana, and reaffirms the commitment of the SI to peace in Colombia. The SI is there with the same message about constructing peace in other parts of the world where there are ongoing or unresolved conflicts, including the fight against terrorism, such as Syria, Northern Iraq and other regions. Or in its work to ensure the peaceful resolution of the conflicts in the Middle East; between Russia and Ukraine; in Western Sahara; between Turkey and Armenia. In all these cases, the SI and its member parties are working towards action and political dialogue, inspired by our ideals and values, he added. He also mentioned the crisis on the Colombian-Venezuelan border, at its height during the Committee's meeting, expressing the SI's dismay about the situation and the solidarity of the organisation with the Colombian families on the border between the two nations whose dignity and rights have been affected.

Luis Ayala considered the economic situation affecting the countries of the region to be a challenge for the member parties from Latin America and the Caribbean, and he urged them to face forthcoming electoral

commitments, in a current atmosphere of diminishing popularity of governments and politics, maintaining ambitious objectives for the people and holding fast to the ideals and principles of the social democratic movement. At the same time, he emphasised the current importance of transparency and closeness to the people and called for a continuing clear position on the fight against corruption and the rejection of improper relations that can arise between money and politics. Lastly, he expressed his belief that the SI has been, and continues to be, a presence in the great challenges facing the world today, that are also challenges for the region. Amongst others, he recalled the work of the SI on climate change, that will continue with the SI presence at the COP21 Conference in Paris. Luis Ayala concluded by noting that a central issue for Latin America and the Caribbean was to make progress in the overcoming of inequality, and to this end the SI will, in the second semester of this year, begin the work of the SI's Commission on this issue with people from this and every region.

Horacio Serpa welcomed the Committee on behalf of the PLC and expressed thanks for the SI's presence in Colombia at a moment that was especially important for the advance of the peace process. He explained that currently the PLC is the second most important Colombian political party, with 17 senators and 42 deputies, and holds such important political positions as the presidency of the Senate, the Ministry of the Interior and the mayoralty of the city of Cartagena itself. In the elections this coming October, he continued, the PLC hopes to position itself as the leading political force in Colombia, looking to have a member of the party elected as president of the Republic in 2018. In addition, he indicated to those present that given the present situation on the border with Venezuela, the country was united in its indignant rejection of the decisions that Nicolás Maduro has made.

Referring to the peace process, Horacio Serpa recalled that after independence from Spain, Colombia experienced two hundred years of conflict. He described the various confrontations of the 20th century as a real humanitarian tragedy. Since 1954 the country has witnessed the rise of various subversive groups. After the signing of the peace accord with M19, four out of seven presidential candidates were assassinated during 1990, among them Carlos Pizarro León-Gómez and the Liberal candidate Luis Carlos Galán, a situation of violence that generated a powerful social movement and set in motion the constituent process, with the creation of a National Constituent Assembly, and, in the end, the adoption of a new Constitution in 1991. Referring to the peace process currently taking place between the FARC and the Colombian government, Horacio Serpa expressed his hope that this might come to a satisfactory end in the near future, in a further four to six months, and expressed his desire that the SI would continue to support Colombia in the construction of peace after the signing of the accords.

The chair of the Committee, Miguel Vargas Maldonado, also thanked the PLC for their fraternal welcome. He recalled that during the Committee's last meeting at the headquarters of the Organisation of American States in Washington on December 1st and 2nd, 2014, one of the challenges for the region that had already been sketched out was how to enact public policies to confront economic slowdown to make what he called 'better growth' possible: to reduce inequality and poverty in our countries. At the same time, he maintained, governments and parties faced the challenge of becoming more transparent, moving closer to people, and involving citizens in political participation. The democracies of the region must be preserved and freedoms strengthened, he noted. In this regard, he mentioned the SI's commitment to democracy in Venezuela, recalling the work of the SI Special Envoy to Caracas last November and the report that he presented to the SI Council in Geneva at the end of 2014. Again today, he indicated, the crisis on the border between Colombia and Venezuela and the state of emergency promulgated in the zone by the government of President Maduro, can be seen as a threat to democracy in that country. Lastly, the chair reminded those present of the issues for discussion and opened the meeting.

In relation to the first item on the agenda 'Peace in Colombia – a common objective for people throughout the region and a necessity for everyone's progress', the members of the Committee heard contributions from leaders of the PLC Eduardo Verano de la Rosa, Fabio Raúl Amin, and Héctor Olimpo Espinosa. Delegates from other countries of the region Francisco Rosales (FSLN, Nicaragua), Marcelo Stubrin (UCR, Argentina), Rafael Michellini (NE, Uruguay, Vice-President of the SI), Rafael Tejada (PRD, Dominican Republic), Henry Ramos (AD, Venezuela, Vice-President of the SI), Elsa Espinosa (PRI, Mexico, Vice-Chair of the Committee), Ricardo Navarrete (PRSD, Chile) and Margarita Zapata (FSLN, Nicaragua), also made contributions to the debate, offering reflections on the basis of the peace processes in their own nations, as in the case of the contributions of the Nicaraguan delegates, and formulating analyses and commentaries on the opportunities, challenges and threats that they observe in the experience underway in Colombia.

The Colombian Minister of the Interior, Juan Fernando Cristo Bustos, in a contribution on the background of the issue, gave the Committee an account of the origin and progress of the negotiations underway in Havana. In his judgment, Colombia today has the chance to put an end to a conflict that has already lasted for more than half a century, something that is key to the development of the country. Peace is a long-standing desire and now seems to be a real possibility in the near future. He recognised the progress seen in the recent period has been made possible thanks to the government's commitment to the peace process. At present, he recalled, concrete negotiations are going forward in Havana, whilst in Colombia discussion has already begun about the way in which the citizenry will have a chance to endorse what has been agreed and about the instruments that could guarantee the FARC giving up the armed struggle and re-integrating itself into the society and politics of the country. He held that the progress made in the negotiations can be explained by a number of factors: the

decision of President Santos to create an international framework conducive to peace in relations with Ecuador, Venezuela and other countries of the area; the passing of laws that recognise the victims of the conflict and grant them reparation and the restitution of their lands, not leaving the discussion and implementation of these matters until after the conflict; and the military-strategic superiority of the State vis à vis the subversive groups. To these should be added: the fact that the peace process has victims at the centre of its concerns; there is a commitment to seek endorsement by the citizens of the country; and there are public opponents, among others a sector of the opposition to the government. All of these aspects represent something new when compared with previous frustrating experiences. Between January 1st 2012 and now, the Minister of the Interior informed, more than half a million victims of agents of the State, the FARC and the ELN and paramilitary groups have received compensation. It is this backdrop that allows the rights of the victims to be at the centre of the discussions between the government and the FARC. In his opinion, this novel focus is what explains the progress in the peace process. What is currently under discussion in Havana is the fourth of five points on the agenda, and has to do with the rights of victims: for many it is certainly the most complex of all the issues being addressed, and will require Truth Commissions to be set up and questions of transitional justice to be confronted. On the question of economic compensation and land restitution: during the long period of confrontation, around two million hectares were taken and another four million were abandoned. At present it has already been possible to hand back one hundred thousand hectares and this is expected to rise to a million in 2016.

Minister Cristo ended his contribution by emphasising that today Colombia is breathing the air of democracy and its society is increasingly more civilised and respectful of human rights, which allows the future after the conclusion of the agreements with the FARC to be faced with confidence. However, he reminded the Committee that these agreements represent a beginning to the construction of peace in the country, not an end. Meetings like this one and the repeated commitment of the SI to Colombia after the conflict are important for all Colombians and particularly for the seven million victims of the fifty years of conflict and their relatives, he said.

For the second item on the agenda, concerning the forthcoming electoral processes in the countries of the region, the Committee received a [report](#) sent by the Assistant National Secretary of its member party in Guatemala, Unidad Nacional de la Esperanza (National Unity of Hope, UNE), Haroldo Rodas. The document gave an analysis of the current crisis in the country, its possible effects on the next general elections fixed for September 6th, and the chances of their candidate Sandra Torres, a Vice-President of the SI, going through to the second round. The representatives of the member parties from Argentina Gabriela Troiano (PS) and Jesús Rodríguez (UCR) gave a report to the Committee on the results of the primary elections (or *paso* the Spanish acronym derived from 'open, simultaneous and compulsory primaries') that took place in the country on August 9th 2015, and gave their predictions as to what might lie in store in the elections in October for candidates for the presidential and parliamentary elections and the other posts allocated by popular vote. Jorge del Castillo, the delegate from the Peruvian party APRA, reminded the Committee that although the general elections in Peru will take place next year on April 10th and therefore seem some way off, the campaigns are already underway, with the polls indicating that the candidates for the Fuerza Popular (Popular Power) party, Keiko Fujimori, and the movement Peruanos por el Cambio (Peruvians for Change, PPK) Pedro Pablo Kuczynski are currently frontrunners. However the electoral scene eight months from the elections is completely open and APRA is in a process of refining its participation in them.

Lastly, delegates from the member parties in Venezuela Henry Ramos (AD), [Manuel Rosales](#) (UNT), Carlos Vecchio (VP) and Jorge Mirabal (MAS) informed the Committee that the social, economic and political crisis in Venezuela was rapidly getting worse. In the face of predictably adverse consequences for the governing party in the forthcoming parliamentary elections set for December 6th, the government of President Maduro has intensified the restrictions on freedom of expression and the communication media, disqualified more political candidates on administrative and judicial grounds, and continued to impose restrictions on the human rights of Venezuelans. The Committee was brought up to date on the situation of Leopoldo López the leader of Voluntad Popular by one of his lawyers Roberto Marrero (VP, Venezuela), confirming that López remains under arbitrary arrest, with his human rights violated. In the judgment of the Venezuelan delegates, the crisis on the Colombia-Venezuela border could turn out to be a strategy by the ruling party to obstruct the elections. The Venezuelan delegates insisted on the absolute necessity of fair elections taking place on December 6th and repeated their call for the SI to be present in the country alongside Venezuelan democrats during the process.

In relation to the various national situations, the Committee was also able to hear the reports of the member parties in Argentina (Jesús Rodríguez and Gabriela Troiano, UCR and PS respectively), Brazil (Marcio Bins, PDT, vice-chair of the Committee), Chile (Patricio Tombolini and Pedro Neira, PRSD), Mexico (Elsa Espinosa, vice-chair of the Committee, PRI), Nicaragua (Francisco Rosales, FSLN), Panama (Humberto López Tirone, PRD), Peru (Jorge del Castillo, APRA), Puerto Rico (Rubén Berríos, PIP, Honorary President of the SI), Uruguay (Rafael Michelini, NE, Vice-President of the SI) and Venezuela (Timoteo Zambrano, UNT).

Advancing with the agenda of the meeting, the Committee unanimously adopted a [resolution](#) of support for peace in Colombia, by which it was agreed that a Commission of the Socialist International would be set up to help further the peace process in Colombia. Similarly, a [resolution](#) was agreed on the situation in Venezuela and the crisis on the border between that country and Colombia.

In closing the meeting, the Secretary General of the International, Luis Ayala, again thanked Horacio Serpa and

the PLC for their hospitality and applauded the high level of discussions and the agreements reached at the meeting. He recalled the presence at the Council in Geneva last December of Marina Adamovich, the wife of the Byelorussian leader Mikalai Statkevich, recently freed after four years of unjust political imprisonment; he expressed his hope that Lilian Tintori, who had also spoken at Geneva, might soon be reunited with her husband, Leopoldo López, in freedom. As long as human rights and democracy are not fully respected in Venezuela, Luis Ayala reiterated, the SI will remain committed and will be alongside its member parties in the elections on December 6th.

Lastly, given some of the topics addressed during these debates, and reflecting our commitment to the integrity and to the improvement of the quality of our democracies, he proposed that the agenda of the next meeting could include the issues of public financing of political parties and the transparency of electoral campaigns, along with a discussion and analysis of electoral processes and systems in Latin America and the Caribbean. This was agreed.

[List of participants](#)

[Resolution of Support for Peace in Colombia \(PDF\)](#)

[Resolution on Venezuela and the Crisis on the Colombia-Venezuela Border \(PDF\)](#)

[Press coverage of the meeting](#)

**THE SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE
CARIBBEAN**

RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT FOR PEACE IN COLOMBIA

**Making clear our support for and solidarity with the Colombian people in their
search for peace**

CONSIDERING:

That the Socialist International has always been committed to the processes of dialogue and peace in the world, and has actively supported Colombia since March 1990, during the demobilisation of the guerrilla grouping M19 and the conclusion of an agreement with the Government of Colombia, in which the presence of a Commission from the Socialist International helped to foster a climate of trust and monitor the surrender and destruction of the weapons of the guerrilla group;

That ever since the meeting of this Committee in Bogota, Colombia in October 1999, and the XXI Congress of the Socialist International held in November of the same year in Paris, France, the Socialist International has expressed its solidarity and its willingness to contribute further to the peace process in Colombia;

That at the different meetings of the Socialist International its member parties have expressed their concern that the current Peace Process in Colombia be consolidated, and that this internal conflict might be overcome through the dialogue and negotiation currently taking place;

On the basis of the above, within the framework of the Socialist International Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean, meeting in Cartagena de Indias, Colombia, **THE FOLLOWING IS AGREED:**

ARTICLE ONE: The organisation expresses its unequivocal solidarity with the Colombian people in their search for peace and the final resolution of the internal armed conflict that has persisted for 50 years.

ARTICLE TWO: It supports the Colombian Government in its commitment to the Peace Process and its initiative for dialogue with the guerrilla group FARC in Havana, Cuba, and expresses its hope that these talks result in a stable and lasting Peace Agreement.

ARTICLE THREE: It invites the guerrilla group ELN to follow the path of FARC of dialogue that will allow them to lay down their arms and join in the Havana process, or initiate an independent process.

Therefore, the Socialist International and its member parties meeting in Cartagena de Indias, through this call to Peace in Colombia and support for the resolution of conflicts by means of dialogue and political agreement, in accord with the precepts of solidarity, equality and fraternity that govern our member parties, **AGREE:**

To create and set up the SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION TO MONITOR THE PEACE PROCESS IN COLOMBIA and calls for a meeting with the Government of the Republic of Colombia, with the aim of actively taking forward the peace process within the framework of the Agreements that the Government of Colombia is currently negotiating with the FARC-EP, in Havana, Cuba.

RESOLUTION ON VENEZUELA AND THE CRISIS ON THE COLUMBIA-VENEZUELA BORDER

Meeting in the city of Cartagena de las Indias, Colombia on August 28th and 29th 2015, the Committee of the Socialist International for Latin America and the Caribbean, reported to its member parties on the worsening economic, social and political situation in Venezuela.

Prominence was given to crucial matters such as the violations of human rights, the criminalisation of freedom of expression, the persecution of the media, among others El Nacional, Tal Cual and La Patilla; the exile and imprisonment without due process of those opposed to the government, and, most recently, the political disqualification of leading members of the Mesa de la Unidad Democrática (MUD).

The following statement reflects the opinions of this organisation at a time when the country is preparing to hold its parliamentary elections on December 6th, with the aim of electing the deputies to the National Assembly, and:

REITERATES the request of the International expressed at its Council meeting in New York, last July, that the National Electoral Council of Venezuela and the official Venezuelan agencies issue a formal invitation for the organisation to be present in a capacity as International Observers at the electoral process this coming December 6th, in which the members of the new national assembly will be elected. This invitation will permit formal monitoring and evaluation of the aforementioned elections and will help guarantee the transparency and legitimacy of the process.

EXPRESSES the Committee's concern regarding the events developing on the Colombia-Venezuela border, which put at risk the historic fraternal relations between the two nations, now compromised by the declaration of a STATE OF EMERGENCY by the government of Venezuela without any obvious or well-founded reasons for such a measure, leading to unrest, humiliation and a sense of vulnerability in thousands of Venezuelan and Colombian families, violating their human rights and exposing them to destitution.

We therefore call for a humanitarian approach to the crisis, in keeping with the laws governing the existing migratory processes and agreements between the two countries. Equally, we express our dismay at the absence of agreements that would lead to the immediate resolution of this social calamity, created by mere political interests. The Committee calls for a rapid normalisation of the situation on the border by means of diplomacy, dialogue and cooperation.



SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL

SI welcomes release of Mikalai Statkevich and other political prisoners in Belarus

24 AUGUST 2015

The release from prison of Mikalai Statkevich along with five other political prisoners in Belarus is greeted by the Socialist International, having campaigned consistently for his freedom and rights, as well as for those of all others unjustly detained for political reasons in Belarus.

Statkevich, leader of the SI-member Belarus Social Democratic Party (BSDP-NH), and an opposition presidential candidate in the elections of December 2010, has been held in prison since that time for taking part in peaceful pro-democracy protests against the authoritarian regime of President Lukashenko.

From the moment of his arrest, the Socialist International has been active in demanding his release, including holding meetings in January 2011 with the party, members of the press, legal, civil and human rights organisations in the Belarusian capital of Minsk in which the SI Secretary General, on behalf of the International, denounced the injustices of the regime and highlighted the support and solidarity of the Socialist International and its members worldwide for Statkevich and for all those struggling for democracy and human rights in Belarus. This engagement has continued unabated throughout the four years and eight months of his imprisonment with public statements, declarations of the organisation and by recognising and supporting the courageous campaign of his wife, Marina Adamovich, who has regularly been invited to address the Council and committee meetings of the SI on the situation facing Statkevich and other political prisoners in Belarus.

While welcoming the release of Statkevich and the other five political prisoners, the Socialist International firmly reiterates the need for the holding of free and fair elections and for true democracy in Belarus. Equally, the SI demands the immediate re-instatement of the political rights of Mikalai Statkevich and other opposition figures along with full respect for the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all the citizens, and calls on the international community to remain uncompromising in its demand for true democratic governance in Belarus. The Socialist International will continue actively engaged in support of Mikalai Statkevich and the social democrats in Belarus until this is achieved.

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SI condemns terrorist attack in Suruc, Turkey 21 JULY 2015

The Socialist International vigorously condemns the terrorist attack carried out yesterday in Suruc, Turkey, killing over 30 people and injuring hundreds. We extend our deepest condolences to the family and friends of the victims and our sympathy to the Turkish nation.

The explosion, which was carried out at the Amara Cultural Park in Suruc where hundreds of young people had gathered in support of assistance to rebuild the city of Kobani, is believed to be the work of the terrorist organisation known as ISIS or Daesh.

While recalling the Declaration on Security and the Fight against Terror issued by the Council of the Socialist International at its recent meeting at the United Nations in New York, the Socialist International deplores this contemptible disregard for human life and renews its call for a strengthened coordinated multilateral response to the scourge of terrorism, with greater international cooperation.

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PREVIOUS COUNCILS

NEW YORK

06-07 July 2015

IMAGES (74)

IMAGES



+44

COUNCIL



Meeting of the SI Council at the United Nations, New York

06-07 JULY 2015



Latifa Perry

The Council of the Socialist International convened on 6-7 July at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, as delegates from SI member parties and invited guests ([list of participants](#)) gathered to discuss key issues to our movement on the global agenda. During the two-day meeting, participants addressed the themes of security and the fight against terror, our commitment to the sustainable development goals, and climate change and the COP21.

The Secretary General of the Socialist International, Luis Ayala, opened the meeting and welcomed all delegates. He presented the themes on the agenda, noting that they were topics on which a strong social democratic influence was required. On each theme, delegates would have the chance to listen to interventions from those directly affected by the issues at hand and from others responsible for shaping the debate on an international level. One of the strengths of the Socialist International was its ability to contribute to these discussions from many different perspectives and also to engage on an institutional level, today demonstrating its support for the ideals and work of the United Nations, by holding this meeting at the UN's headquarters.

SI President George Papandreou began his opening address by reflecting on the result of the referendum the previous day in Greece and giving his analysis of the situation that had brought about that outcome, referring to new dividing lines in society as a consequence of regressive policies and globally by those who feel they have benefited from globalisation and those who do not. He referred to the [statement by the SI Presidium](#) in relation to Greece issued on the eve of this Council meeting, with an appeal to European leaders. He also underlined that the themes of this meeting reflected priorities of the global progressive movement. The world needed coordinated action against terrorism, to place human rights at the centre of development questions and global cooperation on climate change, he added.

On the theme of security and the fight against terror, representatives from countries suffering from terrorism presented the situation as they had experienced it. Reports on the ongoing battle against the terror group known as ISIS or Daesh were heard from Iraq and Syria, calling for enhanced support from the international community on the front line of their struggle. Many speakers underlined the need to uphold and defend the values of our International in the face of terrorism and violence, and not to abandon democracy and freedoms in pursuit of security. A functioning democratic state is a counter-example to proponents of fear and terror, and must be safeguarded. Another strong message that arose from the contributions was that more effective international cooperation would be needed to address the new threats to security that are emerging in the world.

In the Middle East, North Africa, the Sahel and other areas of the world where terrorist groups operate, they do so without regard for national borders, and the response must therefore be international and multilateral. A [declaration](#) outlining the position of the International on terrorism and insecurity in the world, with reference to a number of specific situations touched upon during the discussions, was adopted by the Council. Interventions were also heard from representatives of all the SI member parties in Israel and Palestine, and a [declaration](#) of the Council on the Palestinian question was adopted.

On the subject of the sustainable development goals (SDGs), a keynote address was given by Helen Clark, Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme, UNDP, who emphasised that 2015 was a once in a generation opportunity year for development. She expressed her belief in ambitious, global goals which could motivate people to work for a common cause, and that the SDGs would target unfinished business from the period of the Millennium Development Goals, incorporating the economic, social and environmental aspects of development in a three pillar agenda. Diverse interventions from delegates on this theme highlighted the important role sustainable development had to play in peace and prosperity, tackling inequality and women's and minority rights. There was a consensus that the SDGs were extremely representative of many of the fundamental objectives of social democracy, which was reflected in a [declaration](#) on the subject.

The Socialist International continued to place a high priority on the battle to prevent catastrophic climate change, in particular in light of the upcoming COP21 summit where there are high expectations for a long-awaited comprehensive agreement on tackling climate change. In an introductory speech on the theme, SI Vice-President Elio Di Rupo (Belgium, PS), called for a different economic model on climate change to promote global climate justice. He added that a different way to share the planet was needed, one which combines the environmental struggle with greater social justice and a more effective fight against poverty. The former president of the Maldives, Mohamed Waheed, also gave an introductory speech, in which he outlined the particular challenges faced by small island states confronted with climate change. These countries are often low-lying, remote and underdeveloped, and in need of a progressive agreement in Paris that goes beyond mitigation to help the process of adaptation. The Council adopted a [declaration](#) on climate and the COP21 outlining the views of the SI as we approach this moment of great significance for the future of the planet.

Jan Eliasson, Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations, was invited to make a special intervention in which he highlighted the tasks of the UN in an ever more complex international situation with greater uncertainty, turmoil and conflict. Ethnic and religious factors in current crises meant that classic diplomatic tools no longer worked as well as in the past, with nations falling apart and posing serious challenges to regional and international security. All international solutions would require a formula based on peace, development and human rights, he underlined. Following his speech, Eliasson responded to a number of questions from delegates on the mandate of the UN, conflicts in the Sahel and Yemen and the respect for international law, stressing his belief that the UN was a force for good, but there were still occasions where extra efforts were needed from its members for the organisation to live up to its charter and its obligations to all the peoples of the world.

In accordance with a decision by the previous Council meeting, the agenda included a point on the views of the Socialist International on the issue of the Armenian genocide, considering its recognition by a number of national parliaments and supranational institutions. Following an agreement with the SI Vice-Presidents from Armenia and Turkey, it was announced and agreed by the Council that the Socialist International would hold a special hearing or round-table discussion on this issue later in the year under the title "Would Turkish recognition of Armenian genocide allow for genuine reconciliation between Turkey and Armenia?". This meeting would include the participation of representatives of the SI member parties in Turkey and Armenia as well as other member parties interested in taking part, specially invited intellectuals, leaders of social organisations and others.

Following intensive work by the SI Committee on Migrations, a final draft of an SI Charter on the rights of Migrants was presented to the Council by Habib el-Malki (Morocco, USFP) chair of the committee. This Charter places the migration question at the heart of the agenda of the SI, focusing on the rights of each migrant, which are so often overlooked in the national debates on this issue. The Council unanimously adopted the [Charter](#), underlining the commitment of the International to the fundamental rights of all people on the planet.

The recent SI Mission on Western Sahara was introduced by the chair of the SI Mediterranean Committee, Carme Chacón (PSOE, Spain) as an active contribution of the SI towards peace. In accordance with previous resolutions and decisions of the Socialist International, the mission had held talks in situ with the parties to the conflict and a report had been completed. Juan Antonio Yáñez-Barnuevo (PSOE, Spain), who headed the mission, presented an outline of the report and its recommendations. The Council, in accepting the [report](#) by consensus, recorded its appreciation for the work of the committee and its chair, and its recognition to the members of the mission. The Council agreed to continue to be actively engaged on this matter with a view to contributing to achieve a political solution to this conflict and a fair and lasting peace in that part of the world.

The Council heard a contribution on current developments in Venezuela, ahead of the announced legislative elections in December this year, and adopted a [resolution](#) calling for the release of Leopoldo López, Daniel Ceballos, Antonio Ledezma and all other political prisoners, guarantees of respect for fundamental rights and

freedoms, and the return of those politically exiled. A further [resolution](#) calling for the rights of prisoner Marafa Hamidou Yaya in Cameroon was also adopted.

Reports given by the co-chair of SIFAC and the chair of the Ethics Committee were also approved. The Council took note, in accordance with the statutes, of the ceasing of membership of four parties due to non-payment of membership fees.

The Council meeting elected Driss Lachgar, leader of the USFP, Morocco, as a new SI Vice-President and member of the SI Presidium.

Finally, the Council agreed to hold the second SI Council meeting of 2015 in Luanda, Angola, accepting the fraternal invitation extended by the MPLA, the SI member party in that country.

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**Meeting of the SI Presidium
New York, 5 July 2015**

GREECE – APPEAL TO EUROPEAN LEADERS

On the eve of the meeting of the Socialist International Council at the United Nations in New York on 6-7 July, the collective leadership of the organisation issued the following statement after the outcome of the referendum in Greece:

The voters of Greece have expressed themselves despite the fact that the referendum was held under extreme time constraints.

A NO vote concerning a draft agreement with the Eurozone and the IMF on the adjustment program needs to be respected by all parties and a new agreement must be swiftly negotiated.

At the same time the Greek people overwhelmingly desire to remain members of the Eurozone.

A new agreement must take into account the fact that Greece has made huge efforts in fiscal adjustment with painful sacrifices that have reduced GDP by 25% and youth unemployment over 40%.

The "no" vote shows, more than anything the despair of a society without hope for the future, a society pushed to the edge by "austerity only" policies that destroyed development and real economy.

Greece was the first country in the EU hit by the consequences of the 2008 global financial crisis.

Despite the efforts of the socialist Greek government in 2009, Europe was slow to respond in an effective and unified way against market pressures.

A more concerted reaction of the EU at the time could have avoided the excessive pain and the dramatic dilemmas that brought about the continuation of the Greek crisis.

Had the conservative leadership of Europe heeded the warnings of the Greek socialist government under PM Papandreou that the key for Europe and Greece was not more austerity but deeper reforms, had they supported a referendum at an earlier stage, the crisis would have been an opportunity for democratic change and progress. The conservative majority in the European institutions refused to take into account the warnings and insisted to put more emphasis on fiscal consolidation and reform of the labour market than designing the foundations for a solid economic recovery encouraging investments and creating jobs.

This week crucial decisions need to be made both in Greece and in the EU.

We call on the Greek Prime Minister to respect the mandate on the basis of which he was elected and make every necessary effort to keep Greece in the Eurozone. Acting in a

coordinated way with all democratic political forces independently of their support for the Yes or the No should work in a constructive way, for reaching as soon as possible an agreement with the European institutions; an agreement that should include the necessary elements and reforms for a sustainable economy.

Any other option will bring an even worst humanitarian tragedy with unpredictable consequences.

We call on the European leaders and institutions to respect the democratic choices of the Greek people and act constructively for a workable agreement for all sides. The image of the EU, the wealthiest region of the world, will take an irreversible blow by not exhausting all efforts to save a member state in the edge of a total collapse. For the future of Europe it is crucial to find a way to close the gap between the North and the South of the Union in solidarity.

We call on the European Central Bank to continue supporting the Greek banking system, because the victims of a collapse will not be the wealthy tax evaders that sent their money abroad but the weaker groups of the society who risk losing their small savings.

The day after the referendum, for all sides, there is no room for blame games. It is time to respect democracy and individual rights, it is time to stop confrontation and tactical games and encourage an honest discussion on how to come out together, from the current deadlock.

**Council meeting of the Socialist International
United Nations, New York, 6-7 July 2015**

DECLARATION ON SECURITY AND THE FIGHT AGAINST TERROR

The Council of the Socialist International, meeting at the United Nations, New York on 6-7 July, held discussions on the theme of security and the fight against terror. These interventions reflected views from around the world on the need for strong action against terrorism in search of a more secure future.

The Council equally recalled its previous declaration on resolution of conflicts in Geneva, acknowledging the need for the social-democratic movement to remain at the forefront of the struggle to meet the twin challenges of fighting terror and building peace, in order to make the world more secure.

Every loss of innocent life to an act of terror is a tragedy, and the Council expresses its solidarity with all those affected by terrorist attacks around the world. Eradicating terrorism from the world is a fundamental goal for the social democratic movement, to protect lives and livelihoods. A life in security free from the fear of indiscriminate attack is a basic human right, but something that is currently denied to many millions of people across the world. No region of the world has been exempt from the scourge of terrorism, and it will take a coordinated global effort to tackle this menace.

The terrorist organisation known as ISIS or Daesh continues to pose a great threat to both the areas of Syria and Iraq in which it most widely operates, and the world. Their campaign of violence and destruction against both human life and cultural heritage reflect the twisted ideology that these fanatics espouse. The scale of the atrocities perpetrated by Daesh necessitates a response from the whole of humanity, in order to halt and reverse their advance.

The Council further expresses its support to all the forces in both Iraq and Syria who are at the forefront of the battle against ISIS. The Kurdish people in the Kurdistan region and liberated areas in Syrian Kurdistan- Rojava in particular, have led efforts to establish a democratic, non-sectarian, ethnically plural and gender equal society and have made great sacrifices in the ongoing battle against the extremists. The Kurdish Regional Government (KRG) is providing a huge number of services for 2 million IDPs refugees with a battlefield front with ISIS of 1,050 kilometres. The SI expresses its recognition and support to the KRG and its President Massoud Barzani for their efforts against ISIS. We highly support the peaceful solution of the Kurdish cause in the Middle East.

Initiatives are also necessary to protect those who may be vulnerable to the propaganda of by Daesh and seek to travel to join the terror group. It is in the interests of both the countries of origin and destination that these overseas fighters are prevented from joining Daesh. This must be part of a wider effort to understand and address the causes of terrorism to prevent its further spread. Though terrorism must always be condemned, without examining and counteracting the grievances that cause disaffected people to turn to this extremist path, the problem will never be resolved.

The Council regrets the inability of the recent peace talks in Geneva to bring a ceasefire in Yemen, where violence and terror have become widespread. The Socialist International, which has been active and engaged with its Yemeni partners throughout the upheaval of recent years, recognises that the fate of the Yemeni people is at stake, as they seek to build an inclusive society with a working democracy. The

Council reiterates the importance of the role that Yemen's international partners will play, and calls for the resumption of peace negotiations coordinated by the United Nations. Without a political solution and the restoration of the legitimate government of Yemen, the already grave humanitarian situation will continue to worsen and an immediate ceasefire is needed in order to restore supplies of food, fuel and medicine.

We will equally continue to stand on the side of democracy and security in Tunisia, where two recent terrorist attacks have threatened the advances made since the Jasmine Revolution in 2010-11. The Council reiterates its solidarity with the SI member party in Tunisia, Ettakatol, and the ordinary citizens of Tunisia whose future livelihoods are threatened by insecurity and instability. Now more than ever, Tunisia needs support in order to remain a counter-example to the world-view of extremists and fundamentalists. It is also vital to guard against a return to the past and the use of the pretence of security as an excuse to restrict democracy and rights.

The Council of the Socialist International expresses its grave concern at the situation which prevails in Libya and threatens the stability of the region. The Council supports the efforts of the United Nations and of the representative of the secretary general for a political solution based on dialogue between the different components of the Libyan society.

Unresolved conflicts are also a matter of concern in the CIS, Caucasus and Black Sea, in particular the ongoing crisis in Ukraine, which is having a destabilising effect on security in the whole region. The lack of progress in securing a ceasefire is deeply troubling and the Council reiterates the call of the SI Committee for the CIS, the Caucasus and the Black Sea for parties to the conflict to uphold international law and implement the ceasefire as outlined in the Minsk II agreement, along with all the other provisions therein.

The Council expresses its solidarity with the SI member party in Nigeria, as it continues its struggle against armed terrorism. We reiterate our support for regional efforts to combat the threat posed by Boko Haram, which was once again tragically underlined by a wave of attacks that killed more than 150 people in Borno state last week. This cooperation is vital if the six-year terrorist campaign is to be brought to an end.

The Council reiterates the calls made by the SI Africa Committee at its recent meeting in Bamako for the elaboration and adoption of a common security strategy through a security convention in Africa. In Africa and elsewhere, security is an integral part of policies of good governance and sustainable development.

The Council welcomes the recent signing of the Algiers Accord by all parties in Mali. This peace agreement is an advance not only for Mali but the whole Sahel region, and we congratulate the government of Mali and President Keita on this achievement in favour of peace, justice and security. The SI will continue its active engagement in Mali through its member parties and looks forward to the full implementation of the peace agreement and the realisation of the process of national reconciliation.

The Council considers that it is essential to continue the peace process that the Colombian government is engaged with the Farc in Havana. It urges the parts to make all efforts to speed up the deliberations to achieve the agreements that will lead to the end of the Farc armed uprising and the integration of its members, with full guarantees of their personal and political safety, into the Colombian democracy. In the next meeting of the SI Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean that will take place in

Cartagena, the proposal of the Liberal Party of Colombia to form a Commission for the following-up by the SI of the peace process in Colombia, will be discussed.

The Socialist International has and will continue to be proactive in the promotion of peace and security around the world, in particular through its ability to bring together parties on different sides of a conflict in a spirit of cooperation founded upon shared ideological values. Terrorism takes many forms but the common factor is an utter disregard for human life and a willingness to inflict indiscriminate suffering on innocents. The menace of terrorism does not respect international boundaries and requires a multilateral response with renewed international cooperation.

**Council meeting of the Socialist International
United Nations, New York, 6 - 7 July 2015**

DECLARATION ON THE PALESTINIAN QUESTION

The Council of the Socialist International, meeting in United Nations, New York, on 6 - 7 July 2015, 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 Council in New York in June 2010, the SI Middle East Committee (SIMEC) in June 2011 and the SI Council in Istanbul in November 2013 and SI council on December 2014;

- Reflecting representations made by the Palestinian and Israeli member parties of the Socialist International, 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 an end to the Israeli occupation 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;

- *Expresses* its support for the diplomatic initiatives in support of this right and calls for the international community to take urgent action to meet its political, legal and moral responsibility in this regard;

After more than 22 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 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 if negotiations failed, the SI members reaffirm their commitment to:

1. Support the immediate unconditional recognition of the State of Palestine on the 1967 border with East Jerusalem as its capital. Self-determination in an independent Palestine on the 1967 border is a recognized legal right of the Palestinian people. In case that a SI member is a member of her national government, it will be the SI member's duty to ensure the recognition of the State of Palestine;

2. To 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 ending the occupation that began in 1967;

3. To support a total end of all settlement activities including in East Jerusalem, the destruction of homes and the deportation of Palestinians;

4. Encourage the non-violent approach at all levels and by all parties and to demand the immediate cessation of all forms of violence by the Israeli army and settlers against the Palestinian non-violent

resistance and the end of all Israeli settlement activities in the occupied Palestinian territories including Jerusalem;

5. Demand the immediate release of all the Palestinian prisoners imprisoned by the Israel especially the elected members of the Palestinian legislative council, minors and administrative detainees;

6. Strongly condemn the illegal blockade of the Gaza Strip by the Israeli Military Forces, and call the Israeli Government to lift immediately the siege on the Gaza Strip and free the movement of the people and products between Gaza Strip and West Bank including East Jerusalem.

**Council meeting of the Socialist International
United Nations, New York, 6-7 July 2015**

DECLARATION ON THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The Council of the Socialist International, meeting at the United Nations headquarters in New York, reflected on the progress made towards the Millennium Development Goals and the post-2015 development agenda. This process will be centred around the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as proposed by the Open Working Group that emerged from the Rio+20 outcome document.

The Socialist International has consistently argued that to achieve the aim of full development and opportunity for all, while at the same time protecting the future of the planet, a paradigm shift to a wholly sustainable pattern of development is needed. As such, the SDGs are in line with the values of the global social democratic movement, and the SI and its member parties must be at the forefront of a global drive to achieve these goals over the next fifteen years. The development agenda of our movement has three pillars – the economic, the social and the environmental, which must be given equal priority in order to deliver genuine development.

The goal of ending poverty has long been a focus of the work of the Socialist International and in many countries of the world its member parties in government have been instrumental in anti-poverty programmes. The continued existence of extreme poverty is shameful and its eradication must be an absolute development priority. Poverty and underdevelopment are also among the root causes of conflict in the world.

Development and security are therefore closely related, and food, water and energy security need to be achieved within a sustainable framework, for which in many cases investments in infrastructure will be required. The challenge of building up this infrastructure where it is lacking calls for an innovative approach, harnessing technological advances to deliver sustainable industrialisation for developing countries.

The Socialist International has consistently placed equality at the heart of its agenda and it is therefore gratifying to see this vital question among the SDGs. Gender equality is key, as true development will only be achieved with the full participation of both genders at all levels of society, without discrimination. Ending violence against women, giving equal access to education and eliminating poverty are crucial to achieve women's empowerment. The reduction of inequality within and among countries is not only a fundamental progressive value but an absolute priority if the SDGs are to be achieved.

Sustainability is fundamentally about how we ensure the long-term future of the planet, and for this to be achieved, changes need to be made in patterns of consumption and production. Eliminating overconsumption and waste make both economic and environmental sense. Less consumption will equally relieve pressure on terrestrial ecosystems. The atmosphere in which future development will take place will be in many ways defined by the scope and ambition of the global commitment to combat climate change, which ranks as among the most pressing challenges facing humanity.

The Council recognises the importance of 2015 in terms of development. The ability to implement the post-2015 agenda is very much dependent on access to finance, and with this in mind the success of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development is paramount, with the amount estimated to achieve the SDGs by 2030 in key sectors estimated at \$3.3-4.5 trillion. A successful pledging conference can have huge positive ramifications for the UN Summit to adopt the

post-2015 development agenda in September and COP21 in December, making this year a once in a generation opportunity to secure truly sustainable development.

The SI Council reiterates its full support for the SDGs and calls on all countries to adopt the new Post-2015 Development Agenda at the UN Sustainable Development Summit in. These ambitious goals can be the cornerstone of the development agenda for the next 15 years, pointing the way to a more prosperous, more equal, more green future for the planet.

**Meeting of the Council of the Socialist International
United Nations, New York, 6-7 July 2015**

DECLARATION ON CLIMATE CHANGE AND COP21

Original: Spanish

At its Council Meeting in New York on the 6-7 July 2015, the Socialist International addressed the question of climate change and the challenges faced by the international community, in the light of the forthcoming United Nations Climate Change Conference in Paris at the end of this year and what it might achieve.

Climate change is a constant concern of the organization and as such occupies a preeminent place on its agenda. Given the seriousness of the effects of this phenomenon at the global level, and the impact they have on security and human development, the search for an equitable and just solution to climate change requires the mobilization of everyone's capacities. The International, with its Commission for a Sustainable Global Society and its report *From a High to a Low Carbon Economy*, has made this a core issue for its member parties and central to their political proposals.

We must adopt profound changes in lifestyles and models of production and consumption. We must limit the use of non-renewable resources, moderate consumption, maximise efficiency, re-use and recycle. The most serious effects of environmental damage are suffered by the poorest and those with the least protection, migrants amongst others. The financial crisis of 2008 has not created a new form of regulation which would rethink the obsolete criteria that continue to govern the world and affect its environment, pleading for the conservation of the latter and the care of the weakest in society.

Last Friday, the 3rd of July, a group of 36 Nobel Laureates, meeting on the island of Mainau on Lake Constance in Germany produced a declaration on climate change, recalling that 60 years ago, in exactly the same place, other Nobel Laureates had warned of the dangers of nuclear weapons. The threat that now faces the planet is of a comparable magnitude, they maintained. The predictions derived from climate models indicate that it is very probable that over the next century the Earth's temperature will rise by more than 2 °C above its pre-industrial level, unless over the next decades there are major reductions in anthropogenic emissions of greenhouse gases. And they conclude by demanding that the opportunity offered by the United Nations Conference on Climate Change in Paris in December 2015 be used to take decisive measures to limit future global emissions.

From the headquarters of the United Nations in New York, the Socialist International renews its political commitment to this great global task. Paris must present to the international community a universally binding agreement, with common commitments and properly differentiated demands, precise objectives and up to date scientific evaluations, just as the organization has been demanding for many years.

**Meeting of the Council of the Socialist International
United Nations, New York, 6-7 July 2015**

CHARTER OF THE RIGHTS OF MIGRANTS

Original: French

Preamble:

Migration and exile in the majority of cases are associated with the need to overcome poverty, escape conflict and rise to the challenge posed by economic and environmental hardship. However, it remains above all, and for all people, a means of preserving human dignity and is thus directly related to the need to respect human rights and basic liberties.

In the light of the discrimination manifested by a number of national legal systems, as well xenophobic and racist practices, it is imperative that the political parties and governments, members of the Socialist International, demonstrate their commitment to fighting to overcome these injustices by adopting a Charter of Fundamental Rights for Migrants, Refugees and Asylum Seekers.

Globally, migrants contribute to the economic and social development of their countries of origin and destination, due to the transfer of funds, skills and know-how, as well as investment in every sector, thereby reducing unemployment and permitting cultural exchange. Migration has thus contributed towards the achievement of Millennium Development Goals (MDG), reducing poverty by increasing household income and investing in human capital, leading to improvements in health, education and the consumption of goods and services. Nonetheless, if migration is not managed correctly, it can also have negative effects, both for the migrants and the countries of origin, transit and destination. It is a widely held view, however, that migration generally acts as a catalyser for growth, and that migrants remain the agents of development.

This view has been reiterated in the deliberations and conclusions of a number of key world forums, whose outcome has been that the participant States and organisations have now called for migration to be included as part of the post-2015 development agenda.

Faced with these challenges, initiatives for the protection of migrants, the promotion of their rights, acknowledgment of their contribution and integration in return, have been developed at high level, between the countries of departure, transit and destination in the United Nations, African Union, European Union and the ACP.

Although, in recent years, there has been an improvement in some countries, as far as legislation covering migrants is concerned, there has been a noticeable worsening in the treatment of illegal immigrants, asylum seekers and refugees. The latter often fall victim to networks of traffickers, both in their country of origin and host country, suffering economic and sexual exploitation, torture and acts of violence, and often being housed in camps or detention centres under inhumane conditions. The number of victims who have perished at sea, on unseaworthy vessels crossing the Mediterranean to the Andaman Sea, bears witness to the scale of the tragedy.

For progressively minded people, it is becoming an urgent requirement not only to provide effective protection for the basic human rights of migrants, founded on the universal values of human dignity, freedom, equality, solidarity, democratic principles and the rule of law, but also to draw to the

attention of international public opinion the need to act before it is too late; before the problems associated with the flows of migrants create more victims.

The Charter of Rights for Migrants, Asylum Seekers and Refugees is based on the principles set out in the following basic universal texts, all of which affirm their commitment to respect for human life and basic liberties:

The Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen of 28 August 1789;

The United Nations Charter of 26 June 1946;

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 10 December 1948;

The African Charter on the Rights of Man and Peoples adopted on 27 June 1981, which entered into effect on 21 October 1986;

International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, 18 December 1990;

The European Union Charter of 2000;

The International Convention on Migrants' Rights of 2003.

Enjoyment of these rights calls for recognition of our responsibilities and duties towards others, both with regard to present as well as future generations of human beings.

PART I: HUMAN DIGNITY

Article 1: Right to Life

All migrants have a right to life.

Article 2: Right to Dignity

The dignity of migrants, just like anyone else, is inviolable and must be respected and defended.

Article 3: Right to Asylum

Asylum, in accordance with the UN Convention on the Status of Refugees of 28 July 1951, must be guaranteed for all those who suffer persecution. Asylum and humanitarian protection must be granted on an individual or collective basis, whenever persecution is directed against an entire people, a minority or group.

Article 4: Physical and Mental Wellbeing

All legal or illegal migrants, asylum seekers and refugees, have the right to expect their physical and mental wellbeing to be safeguarded through the prohibition of torture, and inhumane and degrading punishment and treatment.

Article 5: Prohibition of Slavery and Forced Labour

All practices such as slavery, servitude, forced or obligatory labour, and human trafficking shall be prohibited.

Article 6: Right to Citizenship

All migrants shall have a right to become citizens of their host country, under fair conditions. Stateless people shall in particular be granted such an opportunity, in line with the UN Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness of 30 August 1961.

PART II: LIBERTIES

Article 6: Freedom of Movement

All migrants residing legally in their host country shall be at liberty to move freely and stay anywhere within the territory of that country.

Article 7: Right to Safety

The safety of migrants must be ensured everywhere and in all circumstances in the countries of transit and in the host countries.

Article 8: Right to Privacy

All migrants shall have the right to expect their private and family life as well as the sanctity of their home to be respected.

Article 9: Freedom of Thought, Conscience and Religious Belief

All migrants shall enjoy freedom of thought, conscience and religious belief and be at liberty to practise their faith collectively, in public or private, in the form of worship, teaching and the performance of rituals.

Article 10: Freedom of Expression

All migrants shall have the right to freedom of expression, opinion and communication subject to respect for the law and regulations of their host country.

Article 11: Freedom of Association

All migrants shall be free to gather and associate at all levels of political, trade union and civic activity, subject to respect for the law of their host country.

Article 12: Freedom to Work

All migrants residing legally shall be free to work and engage in enterprise in their countries of origin and host country.

PART III: EDUCATION

Article 13: Right to Education

All migrants and members of their family shall have the right to an education. That right shall include equitable and unrestricted access, in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Right to Education), to a high standard of primary education and to secondary education at all levels, including for the daughters of migrants and returning migrants. Parents shall also be at liberty to educate and provide religious instruction for their children according to their religious, philosophical and educational convictions, subject to the law of their host country.

Article 14: Professional Training

All migrants must be guaranteed access to professional training as well as the right to establish educational institutions, subject to the law of their host country.

PART IV: EMPLOYMENT

Article 15: Decent Employment

All legally resident migrants shall have the right to seek decent employment, and to work, become established and provide services in conditions equivalent to those enjoyed by all citizens of the host country. Illegal migrants, asylum seekers and refugees must be protected against professional exploitation.

Article 16: Access to Employment Services

All legally resident migrants shall have right of access to a free employment service, and be protected against unfair dismissal in accordance with current legislation in their host country.

Article 17: Working Conditions

All migrant workers shall be entitled to respect for their dignity and to enjoy decent working conditions in accordance with health and safety standards.

Article 18: Holidays

All migrant workers shall have the right to work no longer than the maximum statutory working hours and to benefit from daily and weekly rest periods as well as paid annual holidays, as specified by current legislation.

Article 19: Child Labour

The employment of child labour shall be prohibited. Professional exploitation of children must be punishable under the law of the host country.

TITRE V: RESPECT FOR DIVERSITY

Article 20: Equality under the Law

All people are born free and equal under the law, irrespective of their place of birth.

Article 21: Discrimination

All discrimination on the grounds of race, colour, gender, ethnic or social origin, language, religion or other convictions, or physical condition is prohibited.

Article 22: Respect for Diversity

Transit and host countries shall be required to respect cultural, religious and linguistic diversity.

PART VI: PROTECTION OF MIGRANTS

Article 23: Ownership of Property

All migrants shall be entitled to enjoy ownership of whatever property he or she has acquired legally, including intellectual property, and to use, dispose of and bequeath it, and shall only be deprived of it for reasons of public interest and in accordance with local legislation.

Article 24: Expulsion

Collective expulsions shall be prohibited without proof of irregularity.

No migrant may be denied entry, deported or extradited to a State in which it has been proven that there is a likelihood he or she may be subject to the death penalty, or to inhuman or degrading treatment.

Article 25: Diplomatic and Consular Protection

All migrants residing in a State which is not their country of origin shall enjoy the consular and diplomatic protection of their country of origin and of any other country represented in the State of residence, under the same conditions as those enjoyed by the nationals of that State.

Article 26: Abuse

Migrant workers shall be entitled to protection against all forms of discrimination, work exploitation and abuse, especially poorly qualified workers, female migrant workers and children.

PART VII: HEALTH AND SOCIAL SECURITY SERVICES

Article 27: Health Care

All migrants shall have right of access to preventive medicine and health care facilities under the conditions established by current legislation and national practices. All illegal migrants, asylum seekers and refugees shall be entitled to basic medical care.

Article 28: Social Security Benefits

All migrant workers shall have right of access, in accordance with current legislation, to social security benefits covering maternity, work accidents, dependency or old age, as well as loss of employment.

PART IX: EQUALITY UNDER THE LAW

Article 29: Equality of Treatment by Administrative Authorities

All migrants shall be entitled to impartial treatment of their affairs and to seek help, within the requisite time limits and in an equitable fashion, from the State institutions and other administrative bodies of the host country, whose decisions must be duly justified. Illegal migrants, asylum seekers and refugees shall have the right to be informed about the legislation and administrative procedures that affect them in the countries in which they find themselves.

PART X: JUSTICE

Article 30: Presumption of Innocence

All migrants shall benefit from a presumption of innocence, in accordance with national and international laws.

Article 31: Right to a Defence

All migrants must be guaranteed the right to a defence at law, of which it is a sacred principle. Illegal migrants, asylum seekers and refugees shall similarly be entitled to a defence at law as well as the presence of interpreters during legal proceedings before administrative and judicial courts.

Article 32: Application of Punishment

The principle of legality and proportionality of offences and punishments must be respected for all migrants.

Article 33: Legality of Punishment

No migrant may be tried or punished twice by a criminal court for the same offences, misdemeanours or crimes.

PART XI: FIELD OF APPLICATION OF THE CHARTER OF MIGRANTS

Article 34: Interpretation of Laws and Principles

The limits placed on the exercising of the rights and liberties granted under this Charter must be specified by law in the transit and host countries.

Article 35: Scope of the Charter

The provisions of this Charter must be enforced by means of legislative and executive action by the various States and International bodies concerned.

Article 36: Abuse of Law

The provisions of the present Charter of Migrants, having regard for national legislation and practices, should not be interpreted as including the right to act in contravention of the fundamental rights recognised by this same Charter.

Meeting of the Council of the Socialist International
United Nations, New York, 6-7 July 2015

RESOLUTION ON VENEZUELA

Original: Spanish

The Council of the Socialist International meeting in New York on 6-7 July 2015, considering the serious political, social and economic crisis in Venezuela, as well as the frequent and reiterated violations of human rights, believes it is morally important to issue the following declaration:

The Socialist International adds its institutional voice to that of other international bodies and institutions and of well-known world leaders, to demand the immediate liberation of Leopoldo López, Mayor Daniel Ceballos, Metropolitan Mayor Antonio Ledezma, and political prisoners and students. At the same time, it demands the end of arbitrary persecution and imprisonment without due legal process.

We demand the guarantee of fundamental rights and the return of the exiled opposition leaders, rejecting the political disqualifications, as it is the case of Manuel Rosales, Carlos Vecchio and Carlos Ortega among others, in compliance with the universal values of human dignity, freedom, equality, solidarity and thus complying with the principles of the democratic system and the rule of law.

Expresses its concern and warns the rest of the countries and institutions who are committed to safeguard and guarantee the right to freedom of expression and democratic values, in relation to the new mechanisms of persecution against the independent media.

Hopes that the parliamentary process in Venezuela will serve to encourage dialogue and depolarisation among all political actors and the recovery of a democratic coexistence.

Finally, it requests to the National Electoral Council of Venezuela a formal invitation to attend as International Observers to the electoral process on 6 December 2015, which will elect the parliamentarians who will constitute the new National Assembly, Parlatino and Parlasur.

**Meeting of the Council of the Socialist International
United Nations, New York, 6-7 July 2015**

APPEAL FOR THE RELEASE OF MARAFA HAMIDOU YAYA IN CAMEROON

The Socialist International expresses its concern at the imprisonment of Marafa Hamidou Yaya in Cameroon, on seemingly politically motivated charges. Though steps are needed to tackle corruption and embezzlement in Cameroon, this process should not be used as an excuse to settle political scores. The SI calls on the government of Cameroon to ensure that human rights, the United Nations charter and Cameroon's constitution are respected in this matter.
