



**ACTIVITIES AND STATEMENTS
OF THE
SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL**

**From the Geneva Council in December 2014
to the New York Council in July 2015**

PREVIOUS COUNCILS

GENEVA

12-13 December 2014

IMAGES (104)

IMAGES



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COUNCIL



Meeting of the SI Council at the United Nations in Geneva

12-13 DECEMBER 2014



Latifa Perry

The Socialist International held its second Council meeting of the year on 12-13 December at the United Nations, Geneva (UNOG). The main theme on the Council agenda was 'International peace and security: the resolution of conflicts and countering terrorism'. Discussions were also held on our work to gain new democracies and strengthen democratic governance and on the human dimension of migration and the plight of refugees ([list of speakers](#)).

The SI Secretary General Luis Ayala, in opening the meeting, expressed that the UN was a particularly fitting venue for these discussions, as it shared many of the values and principles of the Socialist International. He reflected that the agenda of the meeting would touch themes that were at the centre of the global agenda, with particular focus to be paid to the resolution of conflicts. It was therefore important that many directly affected by these conflicts were taking part in the discussions to give their first-hand insights – among them representatives of SI member parties and guests from Iraq and Syria, Israel and Palestine and others from other regions facing conflicts in the world ([list of participants at the Council](#)).

Michael Møller, Director-General of the United Nations in Geneva, warmly welcomed all participants and underlined his wish to see a closer relationship between the UN and policy makers, parties and parliaments. He reflected on an era of greater global insecurity, with a growth in inequality and a corresponding lack of participation and increase in discontent. He therefore spoke of the need for shared values and principles, to get beyond the paradigm of 'might equals right'. In the fight for solidarity, equality and justice, he argued, the UN could be counted on.

The Council was next addressed by António Guterres, UN High Commissioner for Refugees and former President of the Socialist International. He reported on the scale of the crisis facing the world, due to the rapidly increasing flows of people newly displaced. The largest mandate of the UNHCR was the Syrian 'mega crisis', but crises such as those in Central African Republic, South Sudan and Nigeria continued to cause great suffering to those affected, wreaking great destruction upon the people of those countries. He warned that the humanitarian system was reaching breaking point, with a shortage of resources for food support to refugees, the great losers in a conflict without winners. He stressed the need to tackle the root causes that create humanitarian problems, which urgently needed to be addressed from a political perspective.

SI President George Papandreu referred to the strength of the ongoing partnership between the SI and the UN as he addressed the opening of the Council. He highlighted the importance of social justice and equality to the global social democratic movement, characterised by the fight for freedom, democracy and human rights around the world. This was increasingly important in an era of challenges – violence and sectarianism, the politics of fear and anger, the global refugee crisis, the scourge of Ebola and the persecution of those fighting for democracy. The SI President underlined that the politics of the organisation represented both the need and the possibility to cooperate to deal with these global challenges in an equitable and global way, guided by the principle of solidarity.

On the main theme of 'International peace and security: the resolution of conflicts and countering terrorism', the Council heard from a number of actors from the front line of the rapidly developing conflict in Syria and

Iraq. Hadi al Bahra, President of the National Coalition of Syrian Revolution and Opposition Forces addressed the meeting and called on the international community to play an important part in bringing a solution to the Syrian crisis, though long-term peace would need a national political solution. He stressed that the majority of the Syrian people wanted a free, democratic and inclusive society and he presented a vision of a government for all Syrians of all ethnicities and religions.

With regard to the fight against ISIS and its terrorist insurgency in northern Iraq and Syria, representatives from the Kurdistan Regional Government in northern Iraq, and political parties representing the Kurdish population in northern Iraq and Syria addressed the Council, giving details of their recent efforts to face the terrorist forces and prevent their advance, calling for assistance from the international community in bringing an end to the conflict. A [declaration on terror in Iraq and Syria](#) was adopted at the close of the meeting, reflecting the exchanges on this deeply violent and troubling conflict.

Discussions were also held on another unresolved conflict in the Middle East, the question of Israel and Palestine. Representatives of Meretz (Israel) and Fatah and the PNI (Palestine) took part in the discussions, and were able to reach an agreement during the course of the Council on a [declaration on peace in the Middle East](#), reflecting the commitment of the SI and its Israeli and Palestinian members to a two-state solution and the recognition of a Palestinian state.

The rich contributions on the main theme were encapsulated in a [declaration of the Council on conflict resolution](#), which emphasises the role of social democracy as a movement for peace and the fundamental importance of global governance in the quest to eliminate war and violence.

Many illuminating interventions were heard on the theme of our work to gain new democracies and strengthen democratic governance, including the [presentation of a report by the SI Special Envoy to Caracas, Venezuela, José Antonio Viera-Gallo](#). Unfortunately, there remains far too high a number of committed democrats around the world who are made to suffer for their beliefs. This message was candidly conveyed to the Council, through special addresses from Lilian Tintori, the wife of Leopoldo López, leader of Voluntad Popular and imprisoned in Venezuela since February, and Marina Adamovich, wife of Mikalai Statkevich, the leader of the SI member opposition party BSDP in Belarus, who has been incarcerated since 2010. The Council adopted declarations on democracy in [Venezuela](#) and [Belarus](#), which call for the release of Lopez, Statkevich and all the other political prisoners in those countries. It equally endorsed a [petition to the government of Bahrain](#) calling for the release of Ebrahim Sharif, an opposition leader currently serving a five-year sentence.

The Council equally adopted a [declaration on democracy](#) reflecting the deep and fundamental commitment of the Socialist International to the establishment, development, strengthening and protection of democracy, having heard contributions and perspectives on the theme from all regions of the world.

On the theme of the human dimension of migration and the plight of refugees, the Council heard a report on the recent activity of the SI Committee on migrations, presented by Marco Di Lello (PSI, Italy), vice-chair of the committee, [which last met in Catania](#) to continue its work on elaborating a Migrants' Charter. This charter will provide a common platform on migration for socialists from both the north and south of the world, putting emphasis on the dignity, rights and freedoms of migrants.

A number of interventions over the course of the meeting referred to the continuing health emergency in countries affected by the Ebola epidemic. One strongly shared sentiment was the need to isolate the virus and not those countries affected by it. The Council adopted a [resolution on Ebola](#) to reflect the position of the SI on this crisis of public health.

The report of the Ethics Committee was presented by its chair, Gilles Mahieu. The committee has continued its work, undertaken since the last Congress, of assessing the many new applications for membership received by the organisation. The chair reported that the committee proposed to admit the Indian National Congress (INC, India) and Voluntad Popular (VP, Venezuela) as new full members, the All Progressives Congress (APC, Nigeria) as a consultative member (awaiting rapporteur's report), the Unified Lumumbist Party (PALU, DR Congo), Komala Party of Iranian Kurdistan (KPIK, Iran), and Komala Party of Kurdistan (KPK, Iran) as observers, and the Euro-Latin American Forum of Progressive and Socialist Parliamentarians, as an associated organisation. The recommendations of the committee were agreed by the Council.

The co-chair of the SI Finance and Administration Committee, Maurice Poler, presented the report of the committee and the budget for 2015, which was adopted. Following the decision of the previous Council to enforce the statutes in regard to non-payment of membership fees, he presented the list of parties and organisations that would cease to be members of the SI with immediate effect, having not paid their fees for three or more years. The decisions were adopted unanimously.

Miguel Vargas (PRD, Dominican Republic), chair of the Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean gave a report on the work of the committee, with particular reference to the last [meeting held in Washington](#) at the headquarters of the Organisation of American States.

Elections were held to fill two vacant positions on the SI Presidium. Following a vote in the Council, Pedro Sánchez (secretary-general of PSOE, Spain) and Umut Oran (CHP, Turkey) were unanimously elected. The Council also endorsed the nomination of Carme Chacón (PSOE, Spain) to become the new chair of the SI Mediterranean Committee. It was further announced that the Mediterranean committee would undertake a mission to Western Sahara and presents its findings in a report to the Council.

The Council also adopted a [declaration on Uruguay](#) and a [statement of solidarity](#) with the relatives of the Mexican students who disappeared in September. The Council recognised that a large number of parliaments around the world have voted on declarations recognizing the Armenian genocide and decided to put this issue on the agenda of the first Council in 2015, one hundred years after this tragedy.

[List of speakers](#)

[List of participants at the Council](#)

Declarations adopted by the Council:

[Declaration on the conflict in northern Iraq and Syria](#)

[Declaration on Peace in the Middle East](#)

[Declaration on resolution of conflicts](#)

[Declaration on democracy](#)

[Resolution on Venezuela](#)

[Declaration on Belarus](#)

[Petition for the release of Ebrahim Sharif in Bahrain](#)

[Resolution on Ebola](#)

[Declaration on elections in Uruguay](#)

[Declaration of solidarity with the students of Ayotzinapa, Guerrero, in Mexico](#)

[Press coverage of the meeting](#)

Declaration on the conflict in northern Iraq and Syria

In relation to the ongoing struggle against terrorism in northern Iraq and Syria, the Council reiterates the need for action to bring the insurgency to an end, as expressed by the Council at its last meeting in Mexico City in June and by the Presidium of the SI from the United Nations, New York in September.

The atrocities committed by terrorist groups against innocent civilians in the region are barbaric and condemned by the Socialist International. Coordinated international action is required on a number of fronts in order to eliminate ISIS and the threat it poses not only to the people of Iraq and Syria but to the wider region and the world. Military action alone cannot defeat the terrorist insurgency, but rather the conditions for its growth and root causes must also be addressed. Violence and terrorism are the result of lack of democracy, equality, tolerance, and the existence of a totalitarianism system and the centralist mentality, which denies ethnic, religious, and political pluralism. Effective action must also necessarily incorporate measures to prevent the flow of funds and terrorist fighters from entering the conflict.

Long-term peace in Syria requires a national political solution, with an important role to be played by the international community. The oppression and subjugation of the Syrian people under the Assad regime and the violence employed by the regime have weakened the democratic opposition and fuelled the growth of extremism. Only a democracy with respect for the rights and freedoms of all, regardless of ethnicity or religion is acceptable in Syria, and this requires the removal of both ISIS and the Assad regime. The democratic opposition, including the National Coalition of Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces, the Syrian Kurds and all those who stand for this fundamental objective have our full support.

Those who have suffered for many decades at the hands of dictatorial regimes are once again on the front line of the battle against extremism. We express our solidarity with all those affected by this conflict, which has had a particularly heavy impact on the Kurdish population. We recognise the extraordinary sacrifices being made to keep this terrorist threat at bay and prevent its wider spread and fully support the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) in Iraq in their efforts to combat the current terrorist threats in the region.

We equally express our solidarity to the people of Kobani, who have become a symbol of the fight against terrorism, and to all the Kurdish people, who in many places have led the resistance against the terrorist insurgency, are part of the solution to the regional conflict and a key partner for peace and stability. As a nation, they must be granted their rightful democratic voice.

The regional humanitarian crisis has been further exacerbated by the violence and terrorism. All efforts must be made to provide humanitarian assistance to the 3.2 million Syrian refugees, who represent the largest mandate of the UNHCR. We equally urge support in the form of humanitarian aid to the 1.5 million people who have been made refugees and internally displaced persons in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq as a result of the terrorist insurgency.

Declaration on Peace in the Middle East

The Council of the Socialist International, meeting in Geneva on 12-13 December 2014, held discussions on the theme of international peace and security and reflected on the prospects for peace in the Middle East.

The Council recalled 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. Reflecting representations made by the Israeli and Palestinian 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 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 between Israel and Palestine, as two sovereign and democratic states for all their citizens and a just solution to the issue of Palestinian refugees.
- expresses its support for the diplomatic initiatives in support of this right including the resumption of negotiations, and calls for the international community to take urgent action to meet its political, legal and moral responsibility in this regard.

After more than 20 years of failing to achieve peace through the bilateral peace process, we believe that the time has come for the international community to 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 calls upon all its members 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 the Palestinian initiative at the UN Security Council to set a deadline of two years to end the Israeli occupation of the State of Palestine.
4. To support a total freeze of settlement activities, the destruction of homes and the deportation of Palestinians.
5. 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.
6. To support the immediate lifting of the siege on the Gaza Strip and the initiation of immediate and full reconstruction there.

Council meeting of the Socialist International
United Nations, Geneva, 12-13 December 2014

Declaration on resolution of conflicts

Under the main theme of international peace and security: the resolution of conflicts and countering terrorism, the Council of the Socialist International met at the United Nations, Geneva on 12-13 December 2014. Representatives from a number of the countries in the world currently affected by conflict presented their perspectives.

Social democracy has its roots as a movement for peace, which is a fundamental precondition for human progress and prosperity. The future safety, freedom and prosperity of humanity is dependent on the prevalence of peace and the respect of international law and the peaceful resolution of conflict. Military conflict and the destruction of life is the opposite of all that this movement stands for. As social democrats we must also make concerted efforts in the field of conflict prevention, seeking to ensure that disputes and differences are resolved in the realm of politics rather than in confrontation. One preventative measure is to address the power structures and the military culture, which pave the way for conflicts.

Solutions to the active conflicts found in the world require a functional system of global governance, to replace the unclear power relations that have allowed them to develop. The solutions to conflicts need to come from a political root, and be addressed from a political perspective. Multilateral solutions are now required in a multipolar world. At a time of greater global insecurity, the role of the United Nations is critical for the advancement of the values of solidarity, equality, sustainable development and justice, values that are at the core of our global movement. The SI has a strong partnership with the UN and believes that close links between the UN and parliaments, parties, policy makers, and civil society are essential.

The high level of conflict present in the world has led to an unprecedented acceleration in the number of people displaced and a humanitarian crisis. There are many active conflicts we see in the world today that are producing no winners, only losers, and many of those losers have been left in desperate conditions. The number and scale of conflicts have pushed the humanitarian system close to breaking point, with a shortage of money for food support to those affected by various conflicts. We declare our support for the efforts of the UNHCR and the humanitarian aid and development community. We appeal to all to provide the necessary assistance to alleviate the ongoing humanitarian tragedies in many corners of the world.

The SI believes that peace in the world is deeply linked with the respect of human and minority rights, transparent democratic governance, social justice, equitable distribution of wealth and sustainable use of resources. Women's rights and gender equality are major indicators of a stable, equitable and peaceful society.

In this context, the Council recognises the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peace-building, and is committed to the implementation of UN resolution 1325. This will ensure the participation of women in peace processes and transitions by the means of introducing affirmative action for decision-making politicians in all phases of conflicts, from prevention to peace-building.

Finally the SI clearly believes that the fight against violence and terrorism cannot lead to the violation of fundamental human rights or the erosion of democratic freedoms and institutions. Our strength lies in the deepening of our democratic institutions and values.

Declaration on democracy

Meeting at the United Nations, Geneva on 12-13 December 2014, the Council of the Socialist International held discussions under the theme of 'our work to gain new democracies and strengthen democratic governance'. Council delegates reflected that where democracy was being strengthened around the world, it was in a great many cases due to the efforts of member parties of the Socialist International. In other countries, where democracy is weak or absent, our members are leading the struggle in favour of this basic right.

In line with the deep and fundamental commitment of the Socialist International to the establishment, development, strengthening and protection of democracy, the Council recognises the indispensable role of democratic institutions. A particular challenge to democracy occurs when democratically elected governments employ undemocratic practices to drive through their agenda and consolidate power. Solid institutions guarantee democratic rights and are a safeguard against the emergence of governments with authoritarian tendencies that have been legitimised by the democratic process.

A more representative and inclusive state is necessary. This means that the state should be connected with its citizens to ensure mass participation and genuine representation. Democracy must not be allowed to stagnate, but be a dynamic process which we constantly strive to improve. We must look for the best way to ensure that the most vital role of democracy is fulfilled, that is to say the representation of the freely expressed wishes of the electorate.

Dissatisfaction with the electoral process creates disaffection with the political system and is beneficial to extremist parties and ideologies that have been able to benefit from this feeling of alienation. It is vitally important that our movement is able to engage and give hope to young people and become educators for the next generation. Increasing equality of opportunities to education is the only way to address the causes that enable extremist ideologies to gain ground.

Transparency and the struggle against corruption go hand in hand with democracy, in order that those who exercise power are permanently accountable to those who elected them to those positions. Open and participatory government administration can bring citizens closer to public issues and reinforce their inclusion in a democratic decision-making system. Member parties of the Socialist International who are in government should work to strengthen this element of their governance.

Next year the world will celebrate the twentieth anniversary of the Beijing Conference and is an occasion for renewed political will and commitment for a strong, effective, accelerated implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA), focussing on the redistribution of resources, opportunities and power. In order to contribute to this implementation, the SI and its member parties are committed to accelerating the achievement of an equal sharing of decision-making positions by the use of quotas.

Our belief is that political parties, and in particular those who are members of our global movement, can be agents for positive social and political change, by embracing democracy in its fullest capacity and acting as the guardians of the democratic process.

Resolution on Venezuela

Original: Spanish

The World Council of the Socialist International, meeting in Geneva on 12-13 December 2014, after having received the report of the SI Special Envoys on their visit to Caracas on 13-16 November, and having listened to Lilian Tintori, the wife of Leopoldo López, and the views of its member parties in Venezuela, and the International Coordinator of the *Mesa de Unidad Democrática*, resolves:

To endorse the conclusions of the Special Envoys' report in which it is stated that the detention of López must be considered illegal and arbitrary due to the continuous irregularities and delays in the legal proceedings; the permanent denial to requests of provisional release, which ignores the principle of presumption of innocence; the violation of his human rights during the ten months he has been held in prison; illicit penitentiary punishments, isolation, obstruction of his private communication with his lawyer and constant restrictions to his visitors; and especially, for the political nature of the charges against him;

To deplore the fact that the government authorities did not respond to the initiative of this International, missing out on an opportunity for dialogue with its Special Envoys which would have made it possible to open a way forward towards the freedom of Leopoldo López and the other political prisoners. Furthermore, to deplore as well that the Venezuelan government, the legislative power and the Judiciary had paid no attention until now to the different statements by organs of the United Nations that have demanded the immediate liberation of Leopoldo López and other political prisoners;

To request that the Venezuelan authorities respect the full autonomy of the Judiciary so that they may fulfil with impartiality their role of guarantors of the human rights of all the Venezuelans. At the same time, to urge the Prosecutor to fulfil his functions within the framework of the Rule of Law, underlining that its proper functioning is especially important in a nation that shows high levels of violence and insecurity and where the people feel fear and vulnerability due to the impunity applied to many grave crimes;

To request the International Committee of the Red Cross to send a mission to Venezuela to inspect the prison conditions, and, in particular, to visit the political prisoners;

To condemn the arbitrary and illegal detention and the imprisonment of Leopoldo López, Daniel Ceballos, Vincenzo Scarano and hundreds of other Venezuelans who are political prisoners;

To condemn the repression of political protests and the massive detention of university students;

To request the liberation of Leopoldo López, Daniel Ceballos, Vincenzo Scarano and other political prisoners in the country;

To ask the Venezuelan government to respect its obligations contained in the International Pact of Civil and Political Rights;

To request the Venezuelan government to respect its obligations contained in the Treaties under the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatment, of which Venezuela is part;

To request conditions for the return of political figures in exile, in particular Manuel Rosales, leader of UNT, Carlos Ortega and Carlos Vecchio;

To call for the lifting of the censorship on the freedom of information which has been imposed in Venezuela;

To once again express its solidarity with the Venezuelan people and their prisoners of conscience, reiterating the engagement of the Socialist International with Venezuelan democracy, calling for the immediate freedom of Leopoldo López and all the people who are in jail today for political reasons.

Council meeting of the Socialist International
United Nations, Geneva, 12-13 December 2014

Declaration on Belarus

The Socialist International continues to campaign for the release of political prisoners in Belarus, including Mikalai Statkevich, leader of its member party in that country, the Belarusian Social Democratic Party (BSDP-NH). Presidential elections in that country will take place within the next year, yet Statkevich has remained imprisoned since the previous elections in December 2010, almost the entire duration of a presidential term.

The Lukashenko regime continues to disregard human rights, and political freedoms in Belarus and we urge the international community to increase political pressure on the regime to bring change.

In line with its clear message on democracy, delivered from the United Nations in Geneva on 12-13 December 2014, the SI Council calls for:

The release of Mikalai Statkevich and all political prisoners in Belarus, among them opposition leaders and human rights activists.

The establishment of democratic governance in the country in time for the presidential elections in late 2015, and a free and fair electoral process.

12 December 2014

12 ديسمبر 2014

We, the undersigned, on behalf of the Socialist International are writing to request the immediate and unconditional release of Ebrahim Sharif, the iconic nationalistic leader and former Secretary General of the National Democratic Action Society (Waad), who is a prisoner of conscience serving a five (5) year sentence in the prisons of Bahrain in the aftermath of the 2011 popular rights movement.

نحن الموقعون أدناه، منظمة الاشتراكية الدولية، نطالب بالإفراج الفوري وغير المشروط عن إبراهيم شريف، القائد الوطني الرمز والأمين العام السابق لجمعية العمل الوطني الديمقراطي (وعد) وهو سجين رأي يقضي حكماً بالسجن (5) سنوات في سجون البحرين على اثر مطالبته بالإصلاح السياسي في أزمة 2011.

Sharif has languished in prison despite his unequivocal status as a political prisoner and has been charged under laws which were conveniently applied to restrict basic freedoms and criminalise legitimate opposition to government. We are concerned that the Government of Bahrain, despite its international obligations and confirmations of implementations of the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry (BICI) Report recommendations asserting his status as a political prisoner and the recommendations of the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC), persistently fails in meeting expectations and complying with its aforementioned obligations.

ويقع سجين الرأي والضمير شريف بالسجن رغم كونه سجين سياسي وقد وجهت اتهامات لهم بموجب قوانين طبقت بشكل يناسب تقييد الحريات الأساسية وتجريم المعارضة المشروعة للحكومة. ونحن نشعر بالقلق من أن حكومة البحرين تفشل باستمرار في تلبية التوقعات والامتثال بالتزاماتها الدولية، على الرغم من تعهداتها وتأكيداتها بتنفيذ توصيات اللجنة البحرينية المستقلة لتقصي الحقائق و توصيات مجلس حقوق الانسان التابع للأمم المتحدة، الذين بدورهما يؤكدان كونه سجين سياسي.

Sharif has served three quarters of his sentence since his arrest in 2011. In accordance with Bahraini Law of Criminal Procedures, Article 349 stipulates that prisoners shall have the right of early release. Accordingly, we call on the Government of Bahrain to process his release immediately and without further delay to demonstrate its sincerity in instilling genuine reform.

لقد قضى شريف ثلاثة أرباع فترة حكمه منذ اعتقاله في عام 2011، ووفقاً للمادة 349 من قانون الإجراءات الجنائية البحريني، يكون للسجناء الحق في الإفراج المبكر. وفي ضوء ذلك، فإننا نطالب حكومة البحرين بالإفراج عنه فوراً ودون مزيد من التأخير وذلك لتثبيت صدقها في غرس بذور الإصلاح الحقيقي.

Yours sincerely,

تفضلوا بقبول فائق الاحترام،
(الموقعون)

George Papandreou, President

Luis Ayala, Secretary General

Meeting of the Council of the Socialist International
United Nations, Geneva, 12-13 December 2014

Resolution on the Ebola virus epidemic

Original: French

The Council of the Socialist International, meeting in Geneva on 12-13 December 2014,

Considering that the Ebola virus epidemic is a public health emergency of international importance;

Acknowledging that the impact of this disease can be minimised by preventive measures as well as a strengthened and effective system of surveillance and response;

Equally acknowledging that faced with this alarming situation, the only objective remains the stopping of the transmission of the disease in a spirit of international solidarity, the mobilisation of resources and the harmonisation of strategies;

Expresses a deep concern with regard to the weakness of the health systems in the countries affected in confronting epidemics, notably the Ebola virus epidemic which is currently rampant in West Africa;

Affirms all its solidarity to the affected countries, whose populations are being severely tested;

Underlines the need for a substantial international mobilisation to confront this epidemic and commits the member parties of the SI to mobilise additional resources to support the countries concerned.

Meeting of the Council of the Socialist International
United Nations, Geneva, 12-13 December 2014

Declaration on elections in Uruguay

Original: Spanish

The SI Council, meeting in Geneva on 12-13 December 2014, on the subject of the recent elections in Uruguay:

welcomes the victory of the Frente Amplio (Broad Front), a coalition of all the left, which includes the Socialist Party and the New Space party among its members, both full member parties of the SI;

declares that a third government of the Frente Amplio will allow the consolidation of the changes in Uruguay in the direction of more democracy and more social justice, principles shared by the SI; and

salutes Tabaré Vázquez, the newly elected President, a position he had previously held during the period 2005-2010.

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Declaration of solidarity with the students of Ayotzinapa, Guerrero, in Mexico

The Council of the Socialist International declares its solidarity with the families of the 43 students from the rural teachers' college of Ayotzinapa in the state of Guerrero, Mexico, who disappeared in September.

We condemn those responsible for these acts, and offer our full support all the political actors who are pursuing our commonly shared principles of transparency and the fight against organised crime, and seeking to find justice for the students.



SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL

| PAKISTAN

SI condemns Peshawar massacre

17 DECEMBER 2014

The Socialist International (SI) is deeply shocked and saddened by the abhorrent massacre carried out yesterday by the Pakistani Taliban (TTP) against a military school in Peshawar. We vigorously condemn this despicable act of terror which deliberately targeted hundreds of innocent children, killing at least 132 as well as 9 adults, leaving more than a hundred others injured.

The TTP have claimed that this attack is in retaliation for army-led operations against them in the Khyber and North Waziristan areas. There is no justification for such inhuman acts and the Socialist International further speaks out with a strong and united voice against the misuse of Islam to inflict terror and suffering on the population and in particular the heinous targeting of children.

The international community must stand together against terror and the Socialist International is fully committed in this endeavour. This was also the message that emanated from the SI Council meeting held at the United Nations in Geneva last week.

The Socialist International extends its heartfelt condolences to the families of the victims and expresses its firm solidarity with the Pakistani people and with its member party in Pakistan, the Pakistan People's Party, as they come to terms with this tragedy.



SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL

| FRANCE

SI condemns terrorist attack against Charlie Hebdo magazine in Paris

07 JANUARY 2015

The Socialist International deplors and strongly condemns the abhorrent act of terror carried out today in Paris against the satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo which has left 12 people dead, including two police officers. We express our deepest condolences to the family, friends and colleagues of those who so tragically lost their lives. Our movement worldwide is with the entire French nation at this sad time, firm in our stand against terror and intimidation, in our defence of life and freedom of expression, and resolute in our commitment to protect and strengthen rights and freedoms wherever they are under threat.



SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL

| WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA

Socialist International supports regional efforts to combat Boko Haram in West and Central Africa

20 JANUARY 2015

As renewed meetings of the Lake Chad Basin Commission member states plus Benin get underway today in Niamey, Niger, the Socialist International expresses its full support for such regional efforts to collectively combat terrorism in West and Central Africa, in particular the expanding threat posed by Boko Haram.

The recent fall of Malam Fatori, Damasak and Baga in Nigeria as well as last weekend's cross-border raids into Cameroon and the seizing of scores more hostages, are further cause for alarm, both on a humanitarian level and in terms of maintaining peace and stability in the region. Since April 2014 when 276 schoolgirls were abducted by Boko Haram, the world has continued to bear witness to brazen atrocities by this terrorist group including, according to United Nations reports, violence against civilians, abductions, killings, rape, sexual slavery and the recruitment of children as soldiers, amongst other gross human rights violations. The large-scale displacement of people continues to grow, both within Nigeria and into neighbouring countries, adding to the ever increasing humanitarian crisis.

As the SI has previously stated, multilateral solutions are required to counteract terrorism and the international community must stand together in this endeavour. The Socialist International congratulates the government of President Mahamadou Issoufou in Niger for hosting this initiative and reaffirms its solidarity with all those who are engaged in these efforts.



SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL

| MOLDOVA

Socialist International welcomes agreement for a new coalition government in Moldova

27 JANUARY 2015

The Socialist International welcomes the agreement reached by the Democratic Party of Moldova (DPM) and the Liberal Democratic Party of Moldova (LDPM) to form a coalition government.

Following arduous negotiations between the parties in the Moldovan parliament, both the DPM and the LDPM had demonstrated their will and the determination necessary to move forward to secure a minority coalition which will allow Moldova to address pressing domestic issues, the deepening of the process of integration with Europe, and to deal with foreign policy challenges and security concerns relating to current developments in the region.

It is regrettable that not all the parties sharing a common view on the role of Moldova in Europe were part of this agreement which is centered on a sensible response to the urgent political agenda and contributes to the political stability of the country.

The Socialist International expresses its fraternal support for its member party, the Democratic Party of Moldova, and for the new coalition government. Our International now looks forward to the formation of the new government and to its success in responding to the aspirations and hopes of the people of Moldova.



SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL

| TURKEY

Protecting freedom of expression

02 FEBRUARY 2015

The Socialist International once again expresses its deep concern over actions taken by the Turkish authorities which violate the basic freedoms and rights of its people and have no place in a genuine democracy.

The trial and sentencing to six years imprisonment of the President of the Tunceli Bar Association, Uğur Yeşiltepe, along with six others, for exercising their democratic rights, among them freedom of expression, is completely unacceptable. This is the first time since the military coup of 1980 that a chair of a Turkish Bar Association is sentenced to prison. Prosecutors alleged that through his work, his writings and his participation in rallies in the province of Tunceli, Yeşiltepe was engaged in terrorist acts. The Union of Turkish Bar Associations and all other Provincial Bar Associations have issued statements condemning the verdict and pledging their support for Uğur Yeşiltepe.

The Socialist International also protests against the motion that has been drawn up against Veli Ağbaba, Deputy Chair of the opposition SI member party, the Republican People's Party, CHP, on grounds of "reasonable suspicion", following corruption allegations made by Ağbaba about the ruling party. A recent change in the law in Turkey enables the detention of people and seizure of their property on the basis of a mere "suspicion" as opposed to "strong suspicion based on concrete evidence". The prosecutor in this case has requested a range of prison sentences for Ağbaba, ranging from one year and nine months to a maximum of eight years and four months.

Freedom of expression is a fundamental right in any democratic society, guaranteed by constitution in all states where there is true democracy, and it is enshrined in and protected by the European Convention of Human Rights (ECHR). These actions are clear violations of freedom of expression by a government which is evidently repressing its judiciary and rendering inoperable the principle of judicial review of government practice and policy.



SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL

| YEMEN

Socialist International condemns armed seizure of power

12 FEBRUARY 2015

The Socialist International is gravely concerned by recent developments in Yemen, where armed Houthi rebels have forcefully seized power. This unwarranted and illegitimate act of aggression jeopardises the progress made by democratic forces since the fall of the authoritarian regime in March 2012 towards the adoption of a new constitution, and the International condemns those responsible.

The Socialist International has accompanied the process of transition in Yemen since the first protests against the former regime, including a visit by its Secretary General who conveyed the support of the SI to all those working for democracy. Our organisation remains fully committed to doing all it can to assist Yemen in this moment of need. We equally extend our full solidarity to our member party, the Yemeni Socialist Party (YSP), which has been at the forefront of efforts to bring peace, stability and democracy to the country.

The only viable path is for Yemen to follow the agreements reached during the process of national dialogue. These agreements committed Yemen to being a unified state on the basis of federalism and democracy and confirmed that the new constitution would be in line with the compliance of international human rights, norms and standards; representative, participatory democracy with open and competitive elections and freedom of political and religious beliefs.

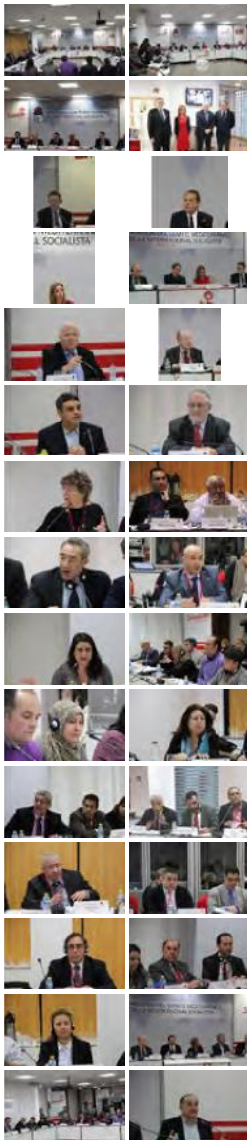
The recent acts of aggression appear to have been triggered by the releasing of a final draft of the constitution. Opposition to this document is however no justification for imposing the resignation of the elected president and the dissolution of parliament. The use of force will never be a legitimate route to power, and the attempted coup in Yemen is contrary to the most fundamentally held values of our organisation.

Yemen is now more than ever in need of the support and solidarity of the international community in order to restore constitutional order. In such a climate of violence and insecurity, it is ordinary Yemenis who continue to suffer on a daily basis. The citizens of Yemen deserve the same rights and freedoms as all people around the world, but without the basic framework of legitimate state institutions and a functioning government, the most basic needs of the people will not be met.

SI COMMITTEES

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MEDITERRANEAN

Meeting of the SI Mediterranean Committee
Valencia, Spain

13-14 FEBRUARY 2015



On 13-14 February the SI Mediterranean Committee convened in Valencia, Spain, hosted by the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party, PSOE. The discussions focused on two main themes: "The essential new impetus for peace and security in the Mediterranean" and "Making cooperation a policy of cohesion for the Mediterranean". The meeting was opened with speeches by Ximo Puig, Secretary General of the Socialist Party in Valencia, the PSPV, by Luis Ayala, Secretary General of the SI, and Carme Chacón, Chair of the Committee and Secretary for International Relations of the PSOE.

Miguel Ángel Moratinos, former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Spain introduced the first main theme and Mustapha Ben Jaafar, Secretary General of Ettakatol, Tunisia, and an Honorary President of the SI, was the introductory speaker of the second theme. The meeting also heard reports from participants on the national situation in the countries of the region.

Following substantive debates, the committee members adopted a Declaration titled 'A new agenda for the Mediterranean' reflecting the subjects discussed and agreements reached. The document highlights, in the first place, the need to put into practice a shared vision and a common framework for establishing priorities and cooperation. It also underlines the need to set in motion a common policy on migration based on the principle of solidarity and humanitarian concerns; the need for a real political strategy to confront terrorism on both shores of the Mediterranean including the promotion and defence of rights, freedoms and tolerance; to advance in the consolidation of democracy; to promote a massive new investment plan for the Mediterranean to tackle youth unemployment and to present an alternative to migration and radicalisation; to create the conditions to facilitate a just political solution to the division of the island of Cyprus; to promote a just and negotiated solution to the conflict in the Western Sahara, and to encourage recognition of the State of Palestine as a contribution to the peace process in the Middle East, leading to the coexistence of two States, Israel and Palestine.

On the occasion of this meeting in Valencia, the Contact Group on Western Sahara previously established by the SI gathered and agreed on the terms of the fact-finding mission to visit the region in early May, headed by Juan Antonio Yáñez of the PSOE, former Secretary of State for Foreign and Ibero-American Affairs, and a former ambassador of Spain to the United Nations. A report on the mission's findings will be presented in the first instance to the Mediterranean Committee and subsequently to the SI Council at its next meeting.

In a closing session in the presence of the media, the Committee was addressed by Joan Calabuig, candidate of the PSPV to Mayor of Valencia; Jaume Collboni, candidate of the PSC to Mayor of Barcelona; Luis Ayala, Secretary General of the SI, and Carme Chacón, Chair of the SI Mediterranean Committee.

[List of participants](#)

[Press coverage of the meeting](#)

DECLARATION OF VALENCIA

A NEW AGENDA FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN

Original: Spanish

The social democratic parties of the Mediterranean region gathered in Valencia on 13-14 February 2015 for a meeting of the Socialist International Mediterranean Committee, to discuss, on the one hand, the essential new impetus for peace and security and, on the other hand, the initiatives that are needed to increase cooperation and to overcome the inequalities that exist between the two shores of the Mediterranean Sea.

We recognised that the initiatives set up in the 1990s, such as the Process of Barcelona and, subsequently, the Union for the Mediterranean, have achieved limited results, due in part to the fact that the European countries have found themselves immersed in one of the greatest economic crises, lasting now more than seven years, and also, because the Arab countries have experienced profound changes as a result of the so-called Arab Spring. However, the Mediterranean Committee remains fully committed to the aims of these initiatives, and reaffirmed the need to create a space for cooperation and dialogue between all the countries of the region, to enable us to address together the global challenges we face.

We are living moments of profound geo-strategic changes in the world, where the Mediterranean continues to be a central focus and where all the global challenges we face are present, interacting and feeding on one another, as much in the areas of peace and security, economics, employment, energy and resource management, as in social and cultural areas.

We are aware that many injustices of all types persist, which give rise to great frustration and are the breeding ground for radical movements that encourage hatred for those who are different, and go as far as the barbaric terrorism of the self-proclaimed "Islamic State", also known as Daesh or ISIS, particularly in Syria and Iraq where they are responsible for the massacre of the civil population. At the same time, the lack of opportunities and hope for the future for many young people who find it difficult to gain employment, forces them to migrate to the countries in the north.

The Mediterranean Committee is of the opinion that the military and security response cannot be the only way to put a stop to the Jihadist terrorism that is a grave threat to all of us, and not only to the lives of human beings, but also to our values and freedoms. It is essential to implement far-reaching political and diplomatic initiatives to accompany the military actions against terrorism, in order to prevent new attacks and to confront the root causes of this phenomenon.

Furthermore, as socialists, we members of the Mediterranean Committee cannot sit idle while the Mediterranean Sea becomes one big cemetery for thousands of people who migrate in search of a better future for themselves and their families, escaping in many instances from wars, and falling prey to networks of traffickers of human beings. We have to find responses and demand actions, putting the people at the centre of strategies that will permit the channelling of migratory flows, and, at the same time, to fight with determination against organised crime, trafficking of human beings and the tax havens where blood-stained money takes refuge.

It should also be said that we continue without finding solutions to old conflicts like that of Israel and Palestine, the division of Cyprus or the situation in Western Sahara, which persist throughout time without signs of progress, in spite of the different peace initiatives of recent years.

It is for all these reasons that the member parties of the Socialist International Mediterranean Committee, highlighting the strategic importance of the Mediterranean and moved by the will to build the future together, have decided that we need to promote a renewed approach, based on the shared responsibility of all and, therefore, to give a new, multilateral, dimension to relations, based on broad cooperation and solidarity, in which both shores participate under equal conditions in order to define a global Mediterranean initiative to regain and revitalise the spirit of the Barcelona Process.

In this regard, we have agreed a new agenda for cooperation in the Mediterranean, which contains the following ten points:

First: to establish a shared vision and a common strategic global framework to allow us the setting up of priorities, objectives and instruments of cooperation.

Second: to set in motion a truly common European policy on migration, based not only on measures of border control, but involving also political and diplomatic action both in the countries of origin and in the countries of

transit, and we strongly demand the solidarity of the European Union to re-establish the recently dismantled “Mare Nostrum” operation and, in general, solidarity with the countries of southern Europe which are in the front line of this humanitarian crisis. At the same time, we ask for support to the efforts in Lebanon to deliver aid to the refugees from the Syrian conflict.

Third: to provide ourselves with a real political strategy to confront terrorism, not only from the point of view of security, police and intelligence services cooperation, but also through the promotion and defence of rights and freedoms, respect and tolerance, as well as the initiative of the Alliance of Civilisations.

Fourth: to advance in the consolidation of democratic systems and the respect for fundamental rights and freedoms, the defence of plural and inclusive societies where minorities and gender equality are respected. In the case of Egypt, we support the decision of the Social Democratic Party (ESDP) to take part in the next parliamentary elections, in spite of the current electoral law and concern over interventions by the State and the President against the opposition, and we call for the elections to be free, allowing the completion of the road map and to fulfil the aspirations of the Egyptian people for freedom, democracy and social justice. In the case of Tunisia, we welcome the success of the process of democratic transition and the contribution of Ettakatol, we extend our solidarity and encourage the efforts to unify the social democratic forces, and we call on them to monitor developments and to preserve the democratic process faced with those who work against it.

Fifth: to promote a massive plan of investment in the Mediterranean to fight against youth unemployment and to present future generations with an alternative to migration and radicalisation.

Sixth: to take decisive steps to consolidate a European foreign policy towards the Mediterranean, which is coherent and has a strong, united voice.

Seventh: Both shores, north and south, to fight together against the terrorism that equally threatens all of us.

Eighth: to create the appropriate conditions to facilitate a just political solution to bring an end to the division of the island of Cyprus, based on a bi-zonal and bi-communal federation, as well as political equality, as recommended in the UN Security Council resolutions, the High-Level Agreements and international law.

Ninth: to make use of the opportunity for dialogue within the framework of the Mediterranean Committee, as well as the generosity and solidarity demonstrated by the parties, to promote a just and negotiated solution to the conflict in Western Sahara, accompanying the work of the United Nations in this respect.

Tenth: to encourage the recognition of the State of Palestine, understanding that it is a contribution to the peace process in the Middle East that must lead to the coexistence of two States, Israel and Palestine, in peace, security and mutual cooperation.

ANNEX

On the occasion of the meeting of the Socialist International Mediterranean Committee in Valencia, the Contact Group on the situation in Western Sahara, previously established by the SI, convened on Friday 13 February 2015.

Taking into account the decision to send a fact-finding mission sur place, that was ratified by the Council meetings in Mexico and Geneva (2014), the Mediterranean Committee agreed the terms of this mission, which will be chaired by Juan Antonio Yáñez (PSOE), together with a delegation whose members will be announced at a later date. This mission will be travelling to the region at the beginning of May 2015, it will have a broad agenda of contacts and meetings with the collaboration of the parties involved, which will allow them to verify the situation in situ with a view to contribute, in line with our socialist and democratic commitment, to the search for shared solutions, accompanying and encouraging the process of negotiation currently taking place under the auspices of the United Nations.

The chair of the delegation to Western Sahara will present the report of the mission, in the first instance to the Mediterranean Committee and, subsequently, to the next Council of the Socialist International.

[Declaration \(PDF\)](#)



SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL

| VENEZUELA

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

20 FEBRUARY 2015

Venezuela has begun to live in a climate of arbitrariness, anguish and repression only comparable to the authoritarian regimes of the past.

At moments when the leader of Voluntad Popular, Leopoldo López, completes one year deprived of his freedom as a political prisoner of the government of Nicolás Maduro, and when other citizens and leaders of the opposition remain in jails and in other places of detention due to arbitrary decisions by the Venezuelan government behind a judiciary which is subservient to the Executive, the harassment, persecution and repression of leaders of the different democratic political forces of the opposition continue unabated.

Yesterday, Antonio Ledezma, leader of one of the opposition parties and metropolitan Mayor of Caracas, was violently arrested by a large number of agents of the State's apparatus of repression, who took him to one of the jails of the regime, while the uncertainty and insecurity of his relatives and of other representatives of the political opposition was made evident before a population which today is vulnerable and unprotected, faced with the whims of the increasing and unacceptable authoritarianism of their government.

Venezuela is becoming increasingly unrecognizable in the world as a democracy, as its government loses legitimacy on a daily basis under the weight of its Human Rights violations and the inhuman and degrading treatment it inflicts on the leaders of the democratic forces and on its own citizens.

The Socialist International, representing progressive political forces throughout the world that stand for social justice and for societies with solidarity and inclusion, rejects and condemns these unacceptable and repressive policies of the Venezuelan government, which throw Venezuelan citizens into a state of helplessness and a step backwards in history, at a time when the only practice that is acceptable everywhere is democracy and respect for the freedoms and rights of all.

We make a fervent call for the immediate release of all the political prisoners, for an end to the persecution and repression of the leaders of the Venezuelan democratic forces by the government of Nicolás Maduro, for a halt to the erosion of the institutions and the legal order of the State, and for an urgent and decided response to the wants and needs of the people who today feel increasingly threatened by the violence and the climate of confrontation which emanates from their own government.

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IPU

The Socialist International at the 132nd IPU Assembly in Hanoi

30 MARCH 2015



132nd IPU Assembly, Hanoi

On the occasion of the 132nd Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) held in Hanoi from 28 March to 1 April 2015, the Socialist International organised a meeting, as it has at previous IPU Assemblies, of parliamentarians from SI member parties. The discussions included an overview of current international developments of common concern, reports from members on issues of interest to their national delegation and an exchange of views on the main themes of the IPU agenda.

Participants included representatives from Angola, Argentina, Austria, Belgium, Botswana, Chile, Haiti, Hungary, India, Mongolia, Mali, Mexico, Namibia, Niger, Pakistan, Palestine, South Africa, Spain, Tanzania, United Kingdom and Zambia.

The threat of terrorism, which was the emergency item of the 132nd IPU Assembly, was addressed by participants who reported on current developments in their regions and efforts underway to confront it. Particular attention was drawn to the unstable political situation in Libya as a haven for the flow of arms and drug trafficking, constituting a serious security threat to its neighbours. Recent terrorist activity, such as that in Nigeria and Tunisia, were referred to and the resolve to overcome this scourge collectively through increased international cooperation was emphasised. For the Socialist International, it was underlined, this subject has consistently been central to its discussions both at regional and global level, it was addressed most recently at the SI Council meeting held last December, as equally it would continue to be high on the agenda of forthcoming regional meetings of the SI.

The situation in the Middle East was subject of debate, in particular the situation of Palestine following the recent elections in Israel and the negative statements made by B. Netanyahu during the closing days of the campaign, which did not augur well for future negotiations leading to the much hoped for and long awaited two-state solution, in the interest of peace and progress. The Palestinian participants also reported on the situation regarding their application to join the International Criminal Court. The Chair of the IPU's Committee on Middle East Issues, Lord Judd from the United Kingdom, contributed to the discussions, updating participants on his committee's work. The task of peace-building required unlimited patience and determination to persevere, and it was stressed that the importance of democratic socialism was more relevant and crucial than ever to build understanding and commitment among people.

As regards increasing recognition internationally of the state of Palestine, the representatives from Belgium reported on their attempts while in government to this end, efforts which are now stalled due to the change of

government in Brussels, but every opportunity was being made to raise this issue. It was recalled that the SI Council at its last meeting had called on all SI member parties to work towards international recognition of the Palestinian state.

The meeting provided participants with an opportunity to share information on their national situations. The gathering heard of latest developments in Mongolia, where the SI-member MPP had joined in a governing coalition. Elections were due in Mongolia next year, and the party would be contesting with a reinforced social democratic agenda.

In Spain the Socialists had recently won an important victory in Andalucia at a time when Europe was facing complex social and economic problems and rising populism from both left and right. The meeting heard of the work and efforts by the Socialist Party and the preparations underway to face the forthcoming local and regional elections due in May.

Regarding Haiti there existed a serious impasse following the end of the last parliament's mandate and no agreement had been reached for moving forward with elections. It was reported that the existing President remained in office despite the absence of a parliament. It was hoped that free and fair parliamentary elections would take place in September, followed by presidential elections in October for which there were numerous registered candidates. The importance of support for the efforts to achieve true democracy in Haiti was underlined, as it was for a fair solution to the situation of vulnerability affecting citizens of Haitian origin living abroad.

The representatives from the SI-member ruling party in Zambia, the Patriotic Front, reported on the recent elections that had taken place in December following the passing away of the late President Sata. These elections had taken place peacefully and democratically. The country now looked forward to hosting the 134th IPU Assembly in Lusaka in 2016, for which preparations were underway.

In his summing up, the SI Secretary General, who chaired the meeting, made reference to recent and forthcoming activities of the organisation, and recalled the decisions of the last SI Council in regard to terrorism. It was imperative to also focus on Democracy, as it was essential to remove sources of conflict including the deficit of rights and freedoms. It was important, he underlined, that in the face of the many challenges ahead for our movement, the values and principles we represent as social democrats should not be compromised, they should be strengthened through the coherence of our policies and the preservation of our identity as a movement of the left.



| NIGERIA

Socialist International greets successful Presidential elections in Nigeria

01 APRIL 2015

The Socialist International expresses its satisfaction at the successful holding of the Presidential elections in Nigeria this week which will, for the first time in this country, allow a peaceful transfer of power from one civilian to another representing different political forces. The fact that this achievement takes place in the most populous country of Africa is a significant advance for democracy in that continent.

We extend our recognition to all the political actors in these elections, including the victorious candidate and next President, Muhammadu Buhari, the outgoing President, Goodluck Jonathan, the political parties and the people of Nigeria who genuinely and democratically engaged in the electoral process thereby validating its enormous significance for the nation.

The Socialist International particularly and warmly congratulates the All Progressives Congress, APC, the political force presenting the candidature of M. Buhari, a party which at the last Council meeting of our International in December 2014 was accepted as a member of the organisation.

As an international political family, we wish the new President and the All Progressives Congress in Nigeria strength, wisdom and success in the challenging agenda that lies ahead to deepen and consolidate democracy, to achieve credible and transparent government institutions to allow good and effective governance, to defeat and eliminate terror and its devastating consequences, and to bring about a society free of fear and free of poverty for all the Nigerian people.

We call on the entire international community to support Nigeria in these endeavours.

SI COMMITTEES

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AFRICA

Meeting of the SI Africa Committee, Bamako, Mali

10-11 APRIL 2015



Latifa Perry

The Africa Committee of the Socialist International met in Bamako, Mali, on 10-11 April, hosted by the two SI member parties in that country, the Assembly for Mali, RPM, and the Alliance for Democracy in Mali - African Party for Solidarity and Justice, ADEMA-PASJ, centering its discussions on the key issues of Security, Democracy and Development for the peoples of Africa.

At the opening ceremony, which was attended by members of the government and leaders of the two Malian SI member parties, the gathering heard words of welcome from Dr Boulkassou Haidara, Vice-President of the RPM, and from Prof. Tiémoko Sangaré, President of ADEMA, followed by speeches by Emmanuel Golou, Chair of the Committee, and Luis Ayala, Secretary General of the Socialist International.

In the working sessions which followed, the Committee members discussed an agenda which included two main themes: "Our commitment to putting an end to terrorism in the Sahel and beyond" and "Securing freedoms, rights and development through democracy".

In regard to the first main theme, Hamadoun Konaté, Malian Minister for Solidarity, Humanitarian Affairs and Reconstruction in the North, made a detailed presentation on the Algiers Accord of 1 March 2015 resulting from extensive negotiations between the government of Mali and the northern armed groups. During the committee's discussions, an analysis was made of the process underway in the country for national reconciliation and peace. An appeal was made for continued international support in order to move forward swiftly with the signing and implementation of this peace agreement in accordance with the commitments made by the parties involved.

Also under this theme, government minister Zeiny Moulaye gave an exposé on the security situation in the Sahel. The problems of transnational crime and the lack of democratic control of the security sector in the region were discussed, as were a series of vulnerabilities and structural deficits, and the fragility of the State and of the ecology. Included among the threats to peace and security in the continent, participants highlighted the significance of extreme poverty, the phenomenon of religious extremism, migration, drug trafficking, the proliferation of light weapons, terrorism, insurgencies, foreign exploits of the region's natural resources and the effects of climate change on the agricultural sector. These factors had dramatic consequences on all aspects of political, economic, social and cultural life, and on governance itself in the countries of the Sahel region.

Participants highlighted the need to integrate the question of security in policies for democratic governance, to increase regional cooperation leading to a shared, collective strategy including the development of adequate

information networks, programmes of crime prevention based on cooperation between the different security services and a reform of the justice sector to better protect citizens and to ensure the integrity of those responsible for administering justice. The important role of women in the prevention and the resolution of conflicts as well as in the consolidation of peace and reconciliation was equally recognised and which needed to be encouraged.

A [Declaration](#) on the peace process and national reconciliation in Mali was agreed, outlining the main issues involved and the views of Committee members.

The second main theme had two introductory speakers: Nancouma Keita from the RPM and Makan Moussa Sissoko from the ADEMA-PASJ. During the discussions, the fragility of democracy in many countries was highlighted and despite the significant advances made, as for example in the case of Mali, there remained many pressing tasks, amongst them the need to reinforce the State and the security forces, to strengthen the role of political parties and civil society, to empower women, men and the youth, to eliminate marginalisation and increase participation, to provide education for all, including women and girls, to ensure adequate training for a professional press, to effectively address the problem of poverty and its consequences, and to enhance regional cooperation. The need for states to fulfil their obligations as regards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and gender equality was also emphasised.

As part of its agenda, the Committee held a discussion on ways to enhance the work of the Africa Committee and to promote democratic socialism in Africa. The Committee recommended the creation of a summer university for the education of political actors and to instil the core values of the Socialist International, particularly at this time of increasing radicalisation and religious extremism. As a way to influence decision-making at regional level, the Committee was also in favour of the SI seeking a status within regional bodies such as the African Union, and to aim to form a socialist group within the African Union's legislative body, the Pan-African Parliament. The Committee was firm in its resolve to deepen cooperation between its members and to strengthen solidarity and the shared goals of our International, opposing attempts to undermine it through alternative alliances which turn their back on the internal democracy and inclusiveness of our movement. The need for parties to fulfil their financial obligations was underlined as an imperative, as the organisation depended upon it. The SI Secretary General was recognised for his efforts towards the good functioning of the International and its Africa Committee. In relation to the next meeting of the Committee, to take place later this year, participants agreed on Mozambique as the venue.

During the third session, participants at the meeting shared information on the national situation in their respective countries. Positive developments were noted in Niger and Senegal, although it was acknowledged that democracy was an evolving process and international vigilance, support and solidarity was important for further progress to be made. The deficit of democracy and lack of respect for basic rights and freedoms in a number of countries was a cause of continued concern and the Committee reiterated its solidarity with the SI member parties in Cameroon, Chad, Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gambia, Mauritania and Swaziland. Calls were made for a peaceful end to the transition in Central African Republic, for successful democratic alternance in Benin, for encouragement to the progressive forces in Burkina Faso, and for further dialogue leading to a political, mutually agreed solution to the situation in Western Sahara. Recognition was extended to H.E. President Mahamadou Issoufou for the important advances made in Niger under his leadership and warm congratulations were expressed to the APC of Nigeria and President-elect Muhammadu Buhari on their recent electoral success, reiterating at the same time full support for all efforts in that country to consolidate democracy, to defeat and eliminate terror, and to bring progress, peace and stability. A [Resolution](#) on the key questions discussed by the Committee was subsequently issued.

Participants expressed their gratitude for the warm, fraternal hospitality extended to them by the two host parties, the RPM and ADEMA-PASJ, as well as by the President of the Republic of Mali, H.E. Ibrahim Boubacar Keita, whose unwavering commitment to the Socialist International and to its values and principles was highlighted.

[List of participants](#)

[Press coverage of the meeting](#)

Declaration of the Socialist International Africa Committee on the peace process and national reconciliation in Mali

Original: French

The Socialist International Africa Committee, meeting in Bamako, Mali, on 10 and 11 April 2015

- Given the depth of the political and security crisis and its multidimensional manifestations in Mali;

- Considering the general context of crises in the African region in general and in the Sahel in particular;

- Analysing the different threats to peace and security in the continent, including the phenomenon of religious extremism, migration, trafficking of all kinds, terrorism, rebellion, foreign exploits of the continent's natural resources, but also and especially the effects of climate change on our core farming and agricultural economy;

- Considering the major challenges for global peace and security which are the Alpha and Omega of all activities of the SI, namely in the areas of:
 - Personal security and social peace
 - Strengthening of democracy and respect for human rights
 - Political stability
 - Sustainable development and the management of natural resources
 - The sovereignty of states
 - Their territorial integrity
 - Peace and international security

- Recognising the important role played in the SI by Mali and its president His Excellency Ibrahim Boubacar Keita, in favour of rights, freedoms and solidarity in Africa and the world;

- Recalling the wisdom and political courage with which the Algiers negotiation process between the government of Mali and northern armed movements was conducted and completed;

- Welcoming inclusive nature of the Algiers talks and the initialling of the draft agreement by the parties involved;

- Welcoming and thanking the international community for its exceptional mobilisation alongside Mali to help end the crisis;

- Stressing the need and urgency for the various stakeholders to move towards the early signing of the peace agreement and its implementation in strict compliance with the commitments made by the parties;

The Socialist International Africa Committee

- Congratulates and thanks H.E. Ibrahim Boubacar Keita, President of the Republic of Mali, for the constant and active role he has always played and continues to play on behalf of Mali within the SI, for the achievement of the ideals of peace, justice, freedom and solidarity;

- Thanks the people and government of Mali for the warm African welcome and hospitality shown to the various delegations of the SI;

- Calls on the Coordination of the Armed Movements to join the project of the Algiers Peace Accords of 1 March 2015;

- Welcomes the good progress of the negotiations process and calls on the government and the armed groups to

move toward the early signing of the peace agreement and national reconciliation and its implementation in accordance with the commitments made by the parties involved;

- Reaffirms its commitment, support and solidarity to Mali for a quick and definitive end to the crisis;
- Warmly welcomes the mediation and the whole of the international community for their invaluable contribution to the resolution of the crisis in northern Mali and call on them to persist for an effective implementation of the peace agreement.
- Calls on the international community to take appropriate sanctions against any party that opposes the signing and the implementation of the Algiers Accord of 1 March 2015.

Meeting of the SI Africa Committee
Bamako, Mali, 10-11 April 2015

RESOLUTION

The Africa Committee of the Socialist International, hosted by its two member parties in Mali, the Assembly for Mali, RPM, and the Alliance for Democracy, ADEMA-PASJ, met in Bamako on 10-11 April 2015, to discuss core issues of our International which are crucial today for the countries of the region, those of Security, Democracy and Development for the peoples of Africa.

With regard to Security on the continent, the Committee agreed to adopt a special declaration on the process for peace and national reconciliation in Mali, outlining the main issues involved and the views of the members of the Committee.

Considering that the region is currently facing a significant challenge and threats to peace and stability originating from among others, trafficking of arms and drugs, religious radicalism, insurgencies and terrorist activity, the Committee welcomes the Algiers Accord relating to Mali and encourages all the parties involved to move forward with its conclusion so as to effectively advance the efforts for peace and security throughout the whole Sahel region.

In particular, the Committee calls on all countries in the region to incorporate the objective of security as an integral part of the policies for good governance and for sustainable development. Equally, it calls for the setting in motion of programmes for transnational crime prevention based on extensive collaboration between the different actors in the security sector; the development of an information network to counteract the different types of threats; and a reform of the justice sector to better protect the citizens, to fight against impunity and to guarantee the integrity of all those responsible for discharging justice.

At regional level, the Committee calls for the elaboration and adoption of a common security strategy through a security convention in Africa; the strengthening of capacity building for the defence and security forces; and the creation of an African Fund for Security.

The Committee reaffirms the important role of women in the prevention and the resolution of conflicts as well as in the consolidation of peace and reconciliation as defined in the UN Security Council resolution 1325 of 31 October 2000. It also calls on the SI member parties in Africa to advance with the elaboration and implementation of the National Action Plan contained in the Resolution 1325.

Regarding Democracy, effective guarantees for the rights and freedoms of all citizens can only be achieved through regular, free and fair elections by secret vote, as stated in Article 21(3) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In this sense, the Committee calls for the strengthening of democracy through transparency in the management of public affairs, respect for the principle of the separation of powers of the state – the executive, legislative and judiciary; ensuring freedom of the press; and broadening decentralisation through regionalisation to achieve a balanced development.

The efforts to empower people through democracy, to defeat terror and resolve conflicts, will permit us to direct our energy and effort towards advancing our struggle against poverty. Education for all, including women and girls, is important for a stable democracy as well as to overcome the scourge of hunger and want. Good governance in Africa means economic growth and jobs to defeat poverty and unemployment. Removing fear and barriers to inclusion in African societies will empower men and women and the youth to gain a better living, open new opportunities, strengthen health systems, education, social protection, and build a society with more solidarity.

Considering the existing deficit of democracy in a number of countries of the region, the Committee underlines the pressing need to ensure free, transparent and fair elections along with total respect for rights and freedoms and expresses its full solidarity with and support for the SI member parties in Cameroon, Chad, Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gambia, Mauritania and Swaziland.

Regarding the Central African Republic, the Committee calls for a peaceful end to the transition and expresses its solidarity with the people of that nation, who since 2012 face a chaotic and uncertain situation which threatens to further destabilise the country. The Committee affirms its full support for our comrade Martin Ziguélé in his bid for the presidency.

The Committee supports and encourages the people of Burkina Faso and its transition government, and calls on the international community to closely follow the process and to lend all the support necessary. We extend our encouragement to the progressive forces in that country, including the MPP, taking part in the presidential elections of October 2015.

In Benin we look forward to an alternance of power resulting from free and fair democratic elections and the Committee expresses its best wishes of success to our comrade Emmanuel Golou, in the presidential elections next year.

The SI Africa Committee lends its recognition to H.E. President Mahamadou Issoufou for the advances made in Niger during his first mandate as head of state and expresses its full support and solidarity with him and the PNDS.

The Committee warmly congratulates the APC of Nigeria and President-elect Muhammadu Buhari on their electoral success and expresses its satisfaction at the exemplary opportunity provided for a peaceful transition of power between civilians. We stand ready to support all efforts in Nigeria to consolidate democracy, achieve good and effective governance and to defeat and eliminate terror.

In regard to Western Sahara, the Committee calls for further dialogue leading to the success of a political, peaceful, mutually shared solution by all parties involved, in line with the process underway under the auspices of the United Nations.

With a view to invigorating democratic socialism in Africa, the Committee recommends the creation of a summer university for the education of political actors and to instil the core values of the SI at a time when radicalism, including religious extremism, is on the increase. The Committee agrees to request that the Socialist International seek a status within regional bodies in Africa, such as the African Union, to deepen cooperation which should also be extended to the parliamentary level, aiming to form a socialist group at the Pan African Parliament.

The Committee calls on all its members to adhere to the Socialist International rules and statutes, notably in regard to the payment of their membership fees, which are indispensable for the functioning of the organisation. The Committee expresses its recognition to the SI Secretary General for his efforts towards the good functioning of the Socialist International and its Africa Committee.

The Committee members reaffirm their resolve to deepen their cooperation and to strengthen the shared goals of our International, opposing any attempt to undermine it by alternative alliances which turn their back on the internal democracy and inclusiveness of our movement.

The Africa Committee extends its warm thanks to the RPM and ADEMA-PASJ for their fraternal hospitality in hosting this meeting and its sincere recognition of H.E. President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita for his work to implement in Mali the principles and values we share and for his untiring commitment to our International.



SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL

GAMBIA

Socialist International calls for respect for opposition in Gambia

17 APRIL 2015

The Socialist International expresses its deep concern and vigorously protests at the actions taken by the government of Gambia aimed at restricting the public activity and outreach of opposition leader Ousaninu Darboe and members of the United Democratic Party, UDP, the largest opposition party in Gambia.

The UDP has embarked on a countrywide tour, from 16 to 26 April. The SI is informed that the security forces in Gambia have not granted the UDP the required permission to use a public address system and instead have put up roadblocks to restrict their freedom of movement and have been cordoning off meeting venues.

The Socialist International calls on the Gambian authorities to respect the democratic rights of its citizens, including the right to assembly and free speech, and to ensure the physical integrity of all those who are gathering legally and peacefully.

The Socialist International will remain vigilant to developments in Gambia and reaffirms its solidarity with the UDP, a member party of the Socialist International.



SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL

| MIGRATIONS

The unacceptable tragedy in the Mediterranean Sea must be halted

22 APRIL 2015

The massive number of migrants and refugees that continue to lose their lives in the Mediterranean Sea is shocking and highlights the deadly consequences of the lack of appropriate action from those who have the capacity and obligation to respond, not only from the realm of the institutions but from that of humanity.

In the last week alone, over a thousand people, vulnerable men, women and children, fleeing war, terror and poverty, victims of unscrupulous people-traffickers, have fallen, drowned in the Mediterranean, a sea that today, instead of bringing people and cultures together, is becoming a grave and a divide between dreams and indifference.

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.

Our International, built upon values of justice and solidarity, and which has worked consistently for a world where everyone's existence matters and where everyone is at the center of the priorities for government and politics, calls on all those with responsibility in Europe to act immediately and effectively to stop this bleeding in the Mediterranean. Our movement will do all it can to contribute to this end.



SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL

NEPAL

Appeal to assist with earthquake relief

27 APRIL 2015

Nepal experienced a devastating earthquake on Saturday, 25 April 2015 at 11.56 am. The epicenter of the earthquake (7.6 on the Richter scale) was in Gorkha District – northwest of Kathmandu Valley. This earthquake has had devastating impact on human lives and property in Nepal.

The human toll is predicted to be in the thousands, it is yet early days to find out the exact number of lives lost (already the count is more than 2,000 dead) due to inaccessibility of the hilly and mountainous areas where villages after villages have been razed to the ground.

Herewith a letter of appeal from Sher Bahadur Deuba, Chair of the SI Asia-Pacific Committee and Vice-President of the Socialist International.

Mr. Luis Ayala
Secretary General
Socialist International
London

27 April 2015

Dear Comrade,

Nepal experienced a devastating earthquake on Saturday, 25 April 2015 at 11.56 am. The epicenter of the earthquake (7.6 on the Richter scale) was in Gorkha District – northwest of Kathmandu Valley. This earthquake has had devastating impact on human lives and property in Nepal. The human toll is predicted to be in the thousands, it is yet early days to find out the exact number of lives lost (already the count is more than 2,000 dead) due to inaccessibility of the hilly and mountainous areas where villages after villages have been razed to the ground. The most populous areas of the inner cities of Kathmandu, Bhaktapur and Lalitpur have also witnessed a great deal of loss of property and lives. A number of UNESCO World Heritage sites have also been decimated. A second big earthquake (6.8 Richter) also hit the eastern area bordering Kathmandu Valley on Sunday, 26 April at around 1 pm at Sindupalchowk District. The devastation caused by this second earthquake may have wiped out a number of settlements in that area as well. The damage to lives and property are of an apocalyptic proportion, especially for a nation, which is still in transition after a decade-long conflict.

I would like to request your good offices to reach out to leaders and country governments all throughout the socialist family to help Nepal in this hour of great need. Besides immediate relief and rescue operations, we will also need support and collaboration for rehabilitation of our nation and its people in the future.

Thank you for the support.

Sincerely,



Sher Bahadur Deuba
Chairman, SI Asia-Pacific Committee
Vice-President of the Socialist International



SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL

| WESTERN SAHARA

Socialist International Mission in search of a political solution

30 APRIL 2015

A Socialist International Mission will hold meetings on 4th and 5th of May in Rabat, the 6th and 7th May in Laayoune, and 8th and 9th of May in Tindouf, in order to promote the search for a solution to the situation in Western Sahara.

The Mission, which was agreed by the SI Mediterranean Committee headed by Carme Chacon of the PSOE in Spain, and which was a decision ratified by the world Council of the International, will hold talks with its members, other political actors, authorities and civil society, to learn in situ the current situation, help the parties move forward in the search for mutually acceptable solutions and encourage the negotiation process taking place under the auspices of the United Nations.

The Mission will be composed of Juan Antonio Yanez PSOE, former Secretary of State of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Spain, who heads the delegation; Mustapha Ben Jaafar, Secretary General of Ettakatol-Democratic Labour Forum in Tunisia and Honorary President of the Socialist International; Adelia de Carvalho, Member of Parliament and Member of the Central Committee of the MPLA in Angola; and Claudio Herrera, Professor of the University of Chile and member of the Secretariat of the Socialist International.



SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL

| TURKEY

Second anniversary of the Gezi Park protests

30 MAY 2015

As we recognised two years ago, the Gezi Park protests marked a turning point in Turkish politics signalling what people and civil society can achieve to change decisions when they run contrary to the will and aspirations of our citizens. Equally, how the mobilisation of people in one city for a just cause connects with the struggle for more democracy and freedoms in an entire society.

On this second anniversary of the Gezi Park demonstrations, we remember all those who became protagonists of a social and political development that left in Turkey, and around the world, a lasting example of how people from all walks of life can come together to change not only the future of a park, but the priorities of a nation. We equally remember those who fell as victims in that struggle to the criminal violence used against the demonstrators.

The voice for more democracy, for the respect of all rights and all freedoms that sounded in Gezi Park, was strong enough to carry a message of encouragement to others in the same struggle not only throughout Turkey but across the globe. We stand together today, on this second anniversary, with all our Turkish friends who continue defending the Park and a democratic future for all people in Turkey.

SI COMMITTEES

IMAGES (24)

IMAGES



MIGRATIONS

Extraordinary meeting of the SI Committee on Migrations

01 JUNE 2015



Latifa Perry

An extraordinary meeting of the SI Migrations Committee was held in Rabat on Monday 1st June, to focus on a social democratic response to the migrations crisis unfolding in different parts of the world. The meeting took place at the Moroccan Parliament, hosted by the Socialist Union of Popular Forces, the USFP.

The Committee, chaired by Habib el Malki (USFP), focused on three key themes: a. Asylum seekers and migrants fleeing conflict and violence: the obligation of the international community to save and protect; b. The moral and humanitarian responsibility to address the plight of migrants escaping poverty and hunger; and c. Building a response to the current crisis based on our values and principles.

Driss Lachgar, First Secretary of the USFP, addressed the opening session. He highlighted the need for a roadmap to develop a comprehensive new approach to today's migrations phenomenon which is not only due to economic factors but also a consequence of the ideology inherited from the cold war, fuelling instability and insecurity, and the correlation with arms merchants and those who finance terrorism. He emphasised the diversity of Morocco with its Moorish and Jewish heritage from immigration in the 16th century and regretted the lack of a medium or long term strategy by today's government in Morocco to effectively deal with this problem.

The meeting also heard a contribution from Driss El Yazami, from the National Council of Human Rights in Morocco who outlined the mutations in migrations over recent decades. He emphasised the current diverse nature of migrants, including those with university degrees and today's high number of women and children, and pointed out that today all countries in the world are affected and all are countries of departure. He also highlighted that the use of migration as a tool for political campaigns should be a subject of debate, as well as the key issue of international governance and the rise of xenophobia.

The SI Secretary General, in concluding the opening session, recalled the point that human history has shown that migration is a source of wealth both economically and culturally and in today's crisis too many people are being denied fundamental rights and too many states are not respecting them. The level of injustice today is immense, bearing in mind the millions displaced by wars, conflicts, persecution, famine and economic hardship. He particularly underlined the need, in facing this crisis, to act in accordance with the values that unite our movement and constitute our identity, and to work for political and human solutions rather than to rely on the use of force.

Outlining the tasks ahead, the Committee chair emphasised the urgent need to come up with a plan of action; to agree on a diagnosis of the situation in different parts of the world to identify the true causes of the circumstances in order to deal with the origins rather than the consequences; to treat the migrations

phenomenon as a symptom of the chaos and institutional destruction we see in many states; to seek solutions other than military ones which are repressive; and to take a fresh look at the concept of security, placing people at the center.

As a specially invited guest, Tun Khin, a Rohingya activist recognised internationally, made a presentation on the history and plight of the Rohingya people, an ethnic group in Burma who are denied nationality. Of a population of 3.5 million, more than 1.5 million have been forced to flee their homeland in Burma due to persecution and violence against them. Presently, 8,000 Rohingya people are stranded on boats at sea, being turned away from neighbouring countries. He stressed the importance of addressing the root cause of this displacement of his people.

During the discussions, it was recalled that although the focus was currently on the plight of migrants at sea, migration was also a matter of crossing the desert where many people in Africa died. While emphasising the benefits of migration, it was pointed out that migration itself was not the problem, it was illegal migration that needed to be addressed. There was also a perceived need to bridge a link between migration and development and to adopt programmes for the transfer of technology to stimulate development where needed. Globalisation and the IT revolution had been expected to bring progress, but in some cases it had brought terror, wars, tanks and more deaths. Greater political efforts were required by the international community to work towards liberating oppressed peoples. With regard to Europe, the need to share the burden was emphasised as well as the need to urgently act to save lives.

Formulating an approach that is gender based was underlined, bearing in mind the high number of female migrants and their particular vulnerability to abuse.

At the conclusion of its discussions, the Committee adopted a [Declaration](#) and agreed to continue advancing with the Charter of the Rights of Migrants, whose elaboration had begun at previous meetings, with a view to presenting it for adoption at the next Council of the Socialist International due to take place at the United Nations headquarters in New York on 6-7 July. The objective of the Charter is to provide a code of conduct for political action by member parties.

DECLARATION

Original: Spanish

1. Migration is a global phenomenon that affects all countries on all continents.
2. Migrants are first and foremost human beings and, as such, they have rights.
3. Crisis situations and acute conflicts in various regions of the world are producing a tragic and irreversible loss of innocent lives among victims of situations that are not of their making. Given the increasing number of tragedies of this kind, the Migration Committee has decided to convene urgently to discuss the situation and call for immediate action.
4. The Socialist International hopes to find comprehensive, lasting and fair solutions that might resolve the root causes of forced migration.
5. However, the Socialist International is aware of the urgent moral imperative to act to stop the human bloodshed that undermines the basic foundations of social order.
6. The Socialist International Migrations Committee urges all its member parties to stand true to their principles and to act decisively in circumstances in which neutrality or indifference are not an option.
7. We must reject solutions to humanitarian crises that are founded on a logic of force or based exclusively on maintaining security. We also reject the criminalisation of migrants. In their precarious situation, they cannot, under any circumstances, be considered guilty of their situation.
8. We socialists must be guided by the principles and values that we share as socialists: respect for the dignity of all people, equal rights and opportunities and the pursuit of justice in all actions: there is no greater or more urgent political aim than that of safeguarding these principles.
9. We urge socialist Governments and Party representatives at all levels immediately to put forward effective initiatives committing themselves to act with all their strength and resources to stem the loss of human lives resulting from illegal migration.
10. Agreement and commitment must be sought between the various States, both in regional institutions and in the context of the United Nations, but the responsibility of individual States cannot wait or be dependent on the existence of these supranational agreements or undertakings.
11. States not only have an obligation to comply with international law, under the treaties and conventions to which they are party, but also the unavoidable moral duty to act without delay to save human lives who depend on actions and decisions that are within their reach.
12. The Socialist International wants to highlight the case of victims of the situations covered by the 1951 Convention and to urge all signatory countries to comply with it scrupulously.
13. The case of the Rohingya people in Burma requires the international community as a whole, and the neighbouring countries in particular, to take responsibility for protecting these people, persecuted as they are in their place of origin, while lacking any international protection to stop the oppression to which they are

subjected or even the slightest degree of solidarity that might provide them with a safe haven. The Socialist International urges the Burmese authorities to cease all forms of persecution of the Rohingya people, to recognise their nationality and the human rights to which they are entitled.

14. The people of Sub-Saharan countries are being affected by armed conflicts, as well as social and gender conflicts and extreme poverty. Emigration is the only escape for many of these people. While the media spotlight is focused on Mediterranean crossings, the new geopolitical map of migration flows shows that the majority of these migrants travel to other African countries. The Socialist International urges socialist parties in the region to strengthen their immigrant protection policies to guarantee their safety and respect for their rights.
15. Countries such as Morocco are an example of a transit country which has become a destination country for many, the authorities of which have sought to establish a policy of acceptance and integration.
16. On numerous occasions, immigrants whose final destination is Europe are subject to abuse by people trafficking networks, whose greed and ruthlessness lead them into situations where their lives are put at risk. The Socialist International urgently calls upon all policy makers to fight these criminal organisations, but also to use all means to prevent the loss of any more lives. It is also a priority to address the different causes, prospects and solutions in an honest dialogue involving European and African political leaders, in order to find global, fair and lasting solutions to the crises that are causing forced migration.
17. In addition to the actions taken directly by States, organisations like the UNHCR, which devote their efforts to caring for millions of refugees and victims of conflicts, urgently need more financial resources to meet their growing needs. Therefore, we call upon all States to contribute jointly to meeting these unavoidable costs.
18. At its next meeting, which will take place at the United Nations headquarters in New York on 6th and 7th July, the Socialist International will discuss the adoption of international undertakings of a global nature, which will include the adoption of a Charter of the Rights of Migrants, which will become a mandatory code of conduct for political action by its member parties.

Declaration

Press coverage of the meeting



SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL

| TURKEY

SI congratulates its member parties in Turkey

08 JUNE 2015

As the final votes in the general elections in Turkey are counted, the Socialist International warmly congratulates its member parties, the CHP and the HDP, on their performance in what was a challenging election campaign that included attacks against opposition parties, in which two people were killed and over 100 injured on June 5 in the twin blasts before the HDP's rally in Diyarbakir, and a parliamentary candidate from CHP was wounded in an armed attack in the southern province of Adana.

The Socialist International is particularly pleased that the HDP has surpassed the excessively high and undemocratic threshold of 10% for entering parliament, taking more than 12% of the vote, while the CHP held its ground on 25% of the national vote share. We equally note with great satisfaction the record number of women elected to parliament.

The result of this election is a clear endorsement by the people of Turkey of a multi-party parliamentary democracy. As Turkey enters a period of negotiations in search of a viable ruling coalition and the prospect of possible new elections, the Socialist International stands in solidarity with its member parties and all those in Turkey who seek to achieve social democratic solutions, social justice, equality of opportunities, and full respect of freedoms and right for all citizens.

SI COMMITTEES

IMAGES (22)

IMAGES



CIS, THE CAUCASUS AND THE BLACK SEA



Meeting of the SI Committee for the CIS, the Caucasus and the Black Sea in Yerevan

08-09 JUNE 2015



The SI Committee for the CIS, the Caucasus and the Black Sea met in Yerevan, Armenia on 8-9 June 2015, hosted by the SI member party in that country, the ARF Socialist Party. The meeting, which was opened by SI Secretary General Luis Ayala, was chaired by Armen Rustamyan (Armenia ARF, co-chair of the committee), Alexandra Dobolyi (Hungary MSzP, co-chair of the committee) and Oleg Tulea (Moldova PDM, vice-chair of the committee). Delegates from countries across the region discussed the three themes on the agenda, namely the regional priorities of strengthening and extending democracy, securing peace and the resolution of conflicts, and advancing the social democratic agenda.

The meeting was marked by the presence of a delegation from the SDPA, the SI member party in Azerbaijan, whose full participation in the meeting and discussions symbolised the spirit of cooperation and dialogue that characterises the global social democratic movement. Regardless of the ongoing tensions between Armenia and Azerbaijan, representatives from the ARF and SDPA engaged in fruitful exchanges over the two days. At the conclusion of the meeting, members of the committee adopted a [declaration](#) that encompassed the main points of agreement.

At the opening of the meeting, all those present observed a moment's silence in memory of Vahan Hovanesian, former leader of the ARF and co-chair of the committee, who passed away in December 2014.

On the theme of conflict resolution, the committee reiterated the fundamental belief of the international that peace is necessary for development and prosperity. The declaration reflected the established position of the International on the need for dialogue as a means to bring unresolved conflicts to an end. The committee further called for a ceasefire and respect for international law in eastern Ukraine, and adherence to the provisions contained in the Minsk II agreement.

Conflict is also linked to democracy, as the establishment of genuine democracy can help to eliminate the deficit in rights and freedoms that is a cause of conflict. In-depth exchanges took place on strengthening and extending democracy in recognition of the lack of effective democracy in the countries represented at the meeting. Delegates reflected on the need for the free expression of political will and discussed ways in which member parties of the Socialist International in the CIS, Caucasus and Black Sea could better cooperate to advance shared aims.

Democracy is not just about elections, but is also reflected in the opportunities granted to opposition parties in the period between elections. In a functioning democracy the opposition has an important role as a counterweight to the government and able to ensure that it does not rule without scrutiny. The severely

diminished and suppressed opposition in many countries of the region is left neither able to hold the government to account nor build for future elections.

Participants also agreed to place strong emphasis on the social democratic agenda as a way to better communicate the message of social democracy. It was agreed that social democracy was greatly needed in the region in order to present a viable alternative to nationalism and neo-liberalism. The social democratic ideology, which focuses on the needs of all rather than a privileged few, should resonate with citizens deprived of their rights under authoritarian and anti-democratic regimes.

One particular area in which members of the SI were taking the lead was in the fight against corruption, which must be eliminated with the help of reinforced institutions, a strong and independent judiciary and a clear and transparent framework for the pursuit and eradication of financial misconduct.

The reports on national situations in the countries represented were given in the context of the themes of the meeting. Delegates heard how new presidential elections in Belarus would take place later in 2015 despite the continued imprisonment of presidential candidate Mikalai Statkevich following the previous elections. A message from Statkevich was read out in which he thanked the SI for its support and reaffirmed his commitment to freedom, justice and solidarity.

Democracy is also absent in Tajikistan, where the ruling elite has vastly superior power and resources and is denying fundamental rights. An increase in ethnic and religious tensions has also contributed to a precarious situation. The opposition had been denied its democratic right in Kazakhstan, where the SI member party the OSDP was preparing for the next parliamentary elections and trying to present an alternative to the dominance of the ruling party. Azerbaijan also reported problems with elections and public administration.

In Armenia, the ARF was making efforts to improve the system of governance, as this would bring about more effective development and strengthen democratic pluralism. This was a great challenge due to the lack of influence wielded by the opposition and a void in between elections. Progress had been made on democracy in Georgia at the 2012 election, but the ruling coalition had not yet been able to overcome the country's economic obstacles, and the task for social democrats was to engage students, trade unions and workers to change the neoliberal consensus. Difficulties of a different nature had been experienced by the SI member party in Moldova, where delays in forming a coalition and a banking scandal had left the situation unstable.

The committee was updated on latest developments in Ukraine, and heard calls from the representative of that country for withdrawal of forces and respect for the integrity of Ukraine's borders. Democracy in Ukraine was also experiencing severe difficulties, with the authorities trying not to allow room for new political parties to operate. The Russian delegation called for a focus on the social democratic agenda in the region, to counteract neoliberal and neo-nationalist powers which were turning the post-Soviet region into a battlefield.

DECLARATION

The Socialist International Committee for the CIS, the Caucasus and the Black Sea, meeting in Yerevan on 8-9 June 2015, discussed the regional priorities of strengthening and extending democracy, securing peace and the resolution of conflicts and advancing the social democratic agenda.

Strengthening democracy

In many countries of the region, the democratic process and its institutions need to be strengthened, and social democratic parties can be at the forefront of these efforts.

The committee condemns the anti-democratic practices prevalent in countries of the region, where a lack of free and fair elections give no prospect of a democratic change in government. Opposition parties are too frequently being denied their voice, with the incumbent ruling elite able to suppress opposition by manipulating their access to power. The free expression of political will and its translation into representation is the foundation of any true democracy and the development of multi-party democracies is crucial.

The committee supports the proposal of its member party for the transition to a fully proportional election system in Armenia, with a corresponding move towards constitutional changes aimed at adopting a parliamentary form of governance. The country also needs legal measures to strengthen the opposition in its role of controlling and counterbalancing the authorities, and full independence of the judiciary.

The committee noted that presidential elections will once again be held in Belarus, despite the many unresolved issues arising from the previous election in 2010. The arbitrary jailing of political opponents is unacceptable and we reiterate the support of the SI for Mikalai Statkevich, who remains imprisoned despite repeated calls from the SI and other international actors for his release.

The committee expresses its solidarity with the SI member party in Kazakhstan, the OSDP, in building a broad coalition of the National Civic Assembly in preparation for upcoming parliamentary elections. It supports all efforts by the party to provide real an alternative to authoritarianism in the form of a democratic and socially responsible state.

The committee welcomes the profound democratic changes in the spheres of freedom of speech, media and political pluralism, which have taken place in Georgia since 2012. We further encourage the ruling coalition to prioritise development-oriented policies, to enable Georgia to achieve a more inclusive and just economy and fight extreme poverty and inequality.

The committee considers that the establishment of genuine democracy can also help advance the cause of conflict resolution, by eliminating the deficit in rights and freedoms that is a cause of conflict.

Conflict resolution

The committee recognises that the region's unresolved conflicts are a matter of urgent concern, and emphasises the need for peace and protection of life as an utmost priority. Peace comes before all else, as without it there can be no prosperity or development. Conflict also brings additional challenges to democracy when it is used as a pretext for restricting opposition and consolidating power.

The work of the committee underlines the fundamental importance of dialogue to the process of conflict resolution, and bringing together delegates from Armenia and Azerbaijan in Yerevan demonstrates the unique character of the Socialist International in this regard. Resolving such a long-standing dispute, with many intersecting claims on the different sides will require great patience and commitment. The SI will continue to prioritise this spirit of dialogue and mutual understanding through the work of its committee and use the opportunity created by this meeting to reach out to the leadership of both countries in the interests of peace.

The committee reiterates its declaration on overcoming conflicts and securing peace in the region issued in Astana in September 2014, and regrets the lack of progress made in securing a genuine ceasefire in Ukraine. We urge the 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 social democratic agenda

The committee considers that social democracy is greatly needed in the region to develop and strengthen as the alternative to nationalism and neo-liberalism. The challenge for social democratic parties in the region is to communicate their vision for the country in a way that resonates with ordinary citizens. In light of the deficiency of democracy in the region, it is important that social democratic parties enhance cooperation with like-minded partners in other countries to build a coherent message.

Social democracy has a vital role to play in the battle against inequality, which is of utmost importance to the long-term development of countries of the region and prosperity of its citizens. The role of social democracy is to constructively oppose policies that focus merely on serving narrow interests, and instead prioritise the promotion of equality, social justice and sustainable development in the interest of all citizens.

Social democratic parties are committed to the fight against corruption, which is a means by which power becomes entrenched and public funds are diverted away from their intended purpose. Corruption is a scourge and must be tackled in all its forms, with the help of reinforced institutions, a strong and independent judiciary and a clear and transparent framework for the pursuit and eradication of financial misconduct.

[List of Participants](#)

[Declaration \(PDF\)](#)

[Press coverage of the meeting](#)



SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL

| YEMEN

For peace in Yemen

16 JUNE 2015

The Yemen peace talks underway in Geneva are crucial to establish a framework for a meaningful dialogue between all Yemeni parties and actors in the current crisis.

At stake first and foremost is the fate of the Yemeni people, their country and their future, and the possibility to continue advancing in their search for an inclusive society and a working democracy. Despite the many obstacles encountered, Yemen had been until recently one of the countries where people and their movements had managed to produce positive change.

It is essential that all members of the international community and of the UN Security Council lend their support and give a chance of success to these talks and this process.

The legitimate government of Yemen should be enabled to resume its functions in Sana'a. All irregular forces and armed groups should abide by a ceasefire and withdraw from the cities they currently occupy, airstrikes should stop, and normal life should be restored.

Our International calls on all those involved in the conflict, inside and outside of Yemen, to act in favour of peace, and place the interest of the Yemeni people first.

In the quest to achieve the above, we fully support the sponsoring by the United Nations of these talks, mindful that the involvement of the organisation will continue to be essential in the time ahead.



SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL

| MALI

Peace agreement in Mali – a milestone to regain stability and security in the Sahel

21 JUNE 2015

The Socialist International greets the completion of the signing yesterday of the highly significant peace and reconciliation agreement between the government of Mali and the coordination coalition of armed groups representing the Tuareg-led rebels, bringing to a conclusion months of arduous negotiations under an Algerian led international mediation, following the armed conflict which began in the North of Mali in 2012.

Our International has actively supported the search for peace and stability in Mali and the whole Sahel region, a subject that has been at the center of its agenda at successive meetings of its Presidium, with the participation of HE President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita of Mali and other leaders from that region, at its Council meetings and most recently, at the last meeting of the SI Africa Committee held in the capital of Mali, Bamako, in April this year.

In congratulating all the parties involved, and in particular in recognising the courageous commitment and engagement of HE President Keita to bringing peace and reconciliation to his country, we look forward to the successful implementation of these agreements and we reaffirm our support for the people of Mali working now to rebuild the common spirit of the nation and a shared sense of purpose to regain the path to development and social cohesion.

The Sahel must continue to be a focus of cooperation for the international community, as multiple challenges remain for the people of this region, including extreme poverty, transnational crime, trafficking of drugs and of migrants, religious extremism, terrorism, and the proliferation of weapons, among others. The success of these key agreements signed yesterday are vital not only for Mali, but equally for the people of the entire Sahel. The Socialist International will continue to be engaged with its member parties in the region, institutions and civil society in pursuit of the shared objectives of peace and progress.

