

Home



Meeting of the Socialist International Committee for Central and Eastern Europe, Rome, 17 April 1999

The Socialist International Committee for Central and Eastern Europe, SICEE, held a special one-day meeting on Kosovo in Rome on 17 April 1999. The meeting, which was hosted by SI member, Democrats of the Left, DS, Italy, and chaired by Piero Fassino and L?szl? Kov?cs, co-chairs of the committee, examined in detail developments in Kosovo with the participation, among others, of the President and the Secretary General of the Socialist International, the leader of the DS of Italy, Walter Veltroni, the Deputy Prime Minister of Albania, Ilir Meta, representatives of member parties from Albania, Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Great Britain, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and representatives from the Social Democratic Party in Croatia, the Party of European Socialists, PES, the Parliamentary Group of the PES and the International Union of Socialist Youth. ([Full List of Participants](#))

Following its discussions, the meeting unanimously approved a [declaration](#) on Kosovo.

DECLARATION ON KOSOVO

The Socialist International Committee for Central and Eastern Europe, SICEE, meeting in Rome on 17 April 1999:

recalling the efforts and attempts made prior to 24 March by the international community to reach a politically negotiated solution to the situation in Kosovo;

regrets the failure of these attempts due to the positions taken by Milosevic and *condemns* his refusal to reach an agreement;

strongly condemns the deportations and forced expulsions suffered by Kosovo's civilian population at the hands of the military troops of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and *affirms* its support for all the efforts undertaken in response to the humanitarian emergency in the region, particularly in Albania and in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia;

reiterates that every woman and every man must be respected, regardless of their culture, religion, nationality, and refuses any attempt to base the existence of states on ethnic purity;

confirms that the objective of the military action undertaken by NATO is to stop the violence and the ethnic cleansing carried out against the people of Kosovo and to open the way towards a negotiated solution to the conflict:

reiterates the position of the General Affairs Council of the European Union and *supports* the proposal of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, which envisages halting NATO's military offensive based on the following conditions, that the authorities in Belgrade:

- immediately put an end to the repression taking place in Kosovo
- stop the activities of their military and paramilitary forces along with withdrawing from Kosovo
- accept unconditionally the return of the refugees and displaced persons
- accept a political framework of negotiation for Kosovo in conformity with the conclusions of the Rambouillet Conference
- accept an international military peacekeeping presence aimed at guaranteeing security.

reiterates - as affirmed by the Heads of State and Government of the European Union in Brussels on 14 April, 1999 - that it is now up to the Yugoslav authorities to fully accept the international demands and begin immediately with their implementation; this would permit a suspension of military action by NATO and would pave the way for a political solution;

welcomes Russia's willingness to work for a solution to the conflict and *reiterates* the need to continue to include Russia in the search for such a solution on the basis of the proposal put forward by Kofi Annan;

underlines the need to implement consultative mechanisms for crisis management which would enable all the countries in the region to be fully involved in the decisions taken by the international community;

reiterates that the functions and powers that the Yugoslav Constitution recognises for Montenegro need to be fully respected;

expresses the need for all countries of the region to respect the principle of the inviolability of existing borders;

denounces the acts of repression against the media, prominent figures in civil society and the democratic political sectors in Serbia, and *invites* all Socialist International member parties to cooperate concretely to reactivate civic and democratic structures for the establishment of a democratic regime in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia;

SICEE *appeals* to all member parties to work towards these goals, to contribute to the search for a political and diplomatic solution to the crisis, and to back every initiative which the United Nations and the Security Council, together with regional organisations, would consider useful to put into effect a political solution for Kosovo;

highlights the generosity with which Albania's government and its people have accepted and given shelter to thousands of refugees and *calls on* the citizens of all the countries in Europe to demonstrate their active solidarity with the Kosovar Albanians, supporting the work of the NGOs active in the region and *encourages* the European Union to continue to back efforts aimed at dealing with the humanitarian emergency;

encourages the European Union to take a strong political initiative aimed at strengthening democracy, economic and social progress and the peaceful co-existence of diverse ethnic groups, religions and cultures within these states and at favouring their integration as a whole into the international community;

asks the European Union to strengthen its ties with the Balkan countries and to this end mobilise its economic and financial means for the reconstruction and development of the region;

reiterates its active solidarity with all the political forces in the Balkans committed to the affirmation of the values of peace, tolerance and democracy.
