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## Meeting of the Socialist International Africa Committee, Bamako, 29-30 March 1999

A meeting of the Africa Committee took place in Bamako on 29-30 March, hosted by the African Party for Solidarity and Justice, ADEMA-PASJ, Mali, with more than sixty delegates from over twenty countries gathered to discuss the following three themes: 'Globalisation and Africa: continuing the debate'; 'Regional conflicts: securing peace in the continent'; and 'Furthering and promoting democracy: the priorities of today'.

Prime Minister of Mali and leader of ADEMA-PASJ, Ibrahima Boubacar Keita, addressed the opening of the meeting and outlined some key issues for consideration. Africa was, he said 'in urgent need of re-examining its priorities for the immediate future'. Ousmane Tanor Dieng, First Secretary of the Senegalese Socialist Party and Chair of the Africa Committee, then set out the work ahead. It was the Committee's role, he stated, to ensure that the African continent found its true expression at the heart of the SI and the themes on the agenda would certainly contribute to this process. SI Secretary General Luis Ayala underlined the pride the International took in meeting in Mali. The SI was well placed, he said, to 'make a difference', not only in Europe, but also on the African continent 'where our shared ideals and values are advanced each day by our African member parties'.

As a result of its debate the Committee issued a statement on globalisation from the African perspective. Resolutions were adopted expressing continued concern about the growing instability in Angola, on the social and political crisis in Burkina Faso, one reiterating the call for the liberation of Alpha Condé, and another reaffirming the SI's support for the democratic opposition forces in Equatorial Guinea.

### STATEMENT ON GLOBALISATION

*Original: French*

The Socialist International Africa Committee, meeting in Bamako, the capital of the Mali Republic, on 29-30 March 1999, after an in-depth reflection upon and analysis of globalisation, which were initiated in Dakar on 25-26 January 1999 and taken up again in Bamako, expressed its firm political

commitment to the idea of defining an African position with regard to the current process of globalisation.

After reviewing some fundamental data about globalisation and the consequences it is very likely to have in the medium and long term on the life of individuals and on the development of human societies, the SI Africa Committee was in a good position to be able to evaluate the opportunities which globalisation offers as well as those factors which threaten the continued existence of human freedom and dignity, the preservation of societal cohesion, as well as the integrity of social and political institutions. No sphere of human activity, in effect, will be spared from this process which affects the political, social, economic and ethical dimensions of our lives.

As a result of the far-reaching impact of the phenomenon of globalisation, the SI Africa Committee, acutely aware of the historic role it has played in African countries as well as the need for African nations to take control of their own future:

1. Views as extremely urgent the need to uphold the following overall principles, along with the strategies which devolve from them, as the fundamental linchpin of an African position on the issue of globalisation.
2. Believes, given the decidedly neo-liberal context within which the current globalisation process is unfolding, and given the massive handicaps faced by the African Continent in achieving equal treatment in an increasingly deregulated commercial environment, that the African Continent should make known and promote its position on this issue to the World Trade Organisation from which, for the time being, it has been excluded. Only by having an effective presence at the heart of this organisation will it be possible for Africans to discuss the ways in which their produce and local industries are treated since, at this point in time, they have no real protection at all, particularly when compared with that afforded the produce and industries of the countries of the North.
3. Expresses its deep concern with regard to the low volume of direct investment which is directed towards the African Continent, despite the colossal amount of international capital which is circulating, whether in the form of portfolio investments or fixed physical capital. The Africa Committee insists in particular on the need to improve the mechanisms whereby direct foreign investment is earmarked and also on the urgent need for a special initiative to be undertaken by the international community on Africa's behalf with regard to direct foreign investment, whether public or private funds are involved.
4. Expresses its concern at the way in which the capacity for analysis, forward-looking planning, project implementation and evaluation by the State is being systematically dismantled, and this is being done in general on the pretext - which is in itself indisputable - of 'good governance'. On this issue, however, the SI Africa Committee insists on the need in those programmes designed to create effective management of public affairs to enhance the skills of local government itself, at the same time as strengthening civil society (political education, the press, and the private sector).
5. Actively supports the implementation of programmes of massive investment in the new technologies, which should include the creation of a scientific and technological culture at the heart of all strata of society, and in particular among the young.
6. Affirms, given the instability of markets and economies around the world, the urgent need for analytical instruments which are focused on the medium and long term, since these are the only ones capable of seeing beyond the policies of short-term adjustments, in order to set in motion a dynamic of economic and social development. The elaboration of planning strategies with a forward-looking vision, while relying on policies which enhance specific sectors and which, in particular, finance local development, should enable the economies of the African nations to become more resilient, that is,

capable of resisting the unpredictable shocks to the system which globalisation often produces.

7. Encourages all African countries to improve the quality of their economic growth in order to begin a new era of equality and social justice. In this regard, the search for a more equitable and more balanced growth should be accompanied by other objectives such as the improvement of the structure of public expenditure in favour of more deprived social strata and regions as well as the search for a more equitable sharing of the effects of economic growth within the lower strata of the social pyramid and, finally, a more 'strategic' structuring of public deficits. The Africa Committee underscores its desire to see a more open, nuanced dialogue take place between the various nations of the African Continent and the Bretton Woods institutions, specifically on the topic of the nature and 'quality' of public deficits.

8. Encourages the African nations, in their search for balanced development, to correct the asymmetric effects of globalisation on their rural areas by promoting policies of land management which are based on international cooperation, thanks to a more successful integration of projects which have a regional dynamic within the central State's programme of public investment.

9. Believes that, while it is important to remain true to the principles and values which have always underpinned universalism, Africa should strive to preserve its unique cultural identity and its ethical values in the light of the onslaught of a 'sub-culture' orchestrated by globalisation. In this regard the SI Africa Committee calls on all African nations to support African produce as well as African cultural products in order to give them a chance on the world market, which would allow them to resist the invasion of their internal markets. Specific initiatives should be implemented in this regard by governments as well as by social institutions.

10. Actively supports the total cancellation or at least the conditional suspension, of the debt of the African nations, through a process of re-conversion which would allow these countries to direct their resources towards social investment which in turn would create human capital, itself recognised as a determining factor of success in the globalisation process.

11. Supports the idea of having an Economic Security Council within the present system of the United Nations and calls on the members of the Socialist International who are in power in the various nations of the world, in particular in Europe, to work towards the implementation of such a project.

12. Firmly advises the African nations to reinforce the political, economic and cultural ties which bind them together and, in particular, calls on them to become a strong and lasting alliance which is capable of renegotiating the impending terms of the Lomé Convention, thereby allowing the interests of the African peoples to be taken into account.

13. Calls on all member parties of the Socialist International and all organisations which fight for progress to actively support the present platform and to help to promote the 'African position' as laid out in this document.

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## RESOLUTION ON ANGOLA

*Original: French*

The Socialist International Africa Committee, meeting in Bamako, Mali, on 29-30 March 1999, having made an in-depth analysis of the current situation on the African Continent, particularly of the armed conflicts which are taking place there, expresses its profound disquiet with regard to the

renewal of hostilities in Angola, which has occurred as a direct result of UNITA's flouting the agreements of the Lusaka Protocol and the relevant resolutions of the United Nations Security Council.

In the light of these events, the SI Africa Committee:

*Expresses* its consternation at this new wave of violence, with its litany of deaths and destruction of infrastructure, which is hindering the process of economic and social development of the country;

*Joins* its voice to those of all Africans worthy of the name, to the international community and its institutions, in order to make Jonas Savimbi and his henchmen responsible for the tragedy which once more has befallen our neighbours, the people of Angola, as well as to demand that the sanctions adopted by the United Nations Security Council be applied in their entirety;

*Expresses* its deep concern at the complicity of certain sectors of the international community which have supported or concealed UNITA's rearmament strategy, which has allowed that organisation to acquire modern weapons and reinforce its position by recruiting mercenaries of various origins, thereby escalating the war which is currently ravaging Angola;

*Strongly condemns* all those who, whether directly or indirectly, are collaborating in the war effort currently being waged by Jonas Savimbi and his men;

*Expresses* its solidarity with the legitimate Government of Angola in the action it has taken in order to safeguard its national boundaries, as well as its efforts to achieve as quickly as possible a lasting peace in the region, and reiterates its fraternal support for the MPLA;

*Calls on* all member parties and all organisations which desire peace to resist concealing or allowing any action to be carried out by those groups and organisations which support or encourage the war effort currently being waged by Jonas Savimbi;

Finally, the Socialist International Africa Committee,

*Calls on* its member parties to promote actions or events which express solidarity with the Angolan people.

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## RESOLUTION ON THE SOCIAL AND POLITICAL CRISIS IN BURKINA FASO

*Original: French*

The Socialist International Africa Committee, meeting in Bamako on 29-30 March 1999,

aware of the social and political crisis in Burkina Faso that has given rise to the establishment of a collective of 45 popular democratic organisations and political parties, including the Party for Democracy and Progress, PDP;

and in accordance with its democratic and socialist ideals, the SI Africa Committee, which had already condemned this situation at its meeting in Dakar in January 1999:

*Demands* that the perpetration of all kinds of bloodshed be thoroughly investigated and that justice be done;

*Supports* and congratulates the collective of popular democratic organisations and political parties, as its aims help to strengthen the rule of law and the democratic process in Burkina Faso;

*Encourages* the PDP to make a greater contribution to the struggle for democracy, which is an integral part of the fight to establish democratic socialism;

*Demands* that the Burkinabe authorities take all necessary steps to put an end to impunity, since impunity stifles democracy.

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## RESOLUTION ON EQUATORIAL GUINEA

*Original: Spanish*

The Socialist International Africa Committee, meeting in Bamako, Mali, on 29-30 March 1999, discussed the progress and promotion of democracy in Africa.

In spite of the progress made by democracy in many African countries, the Committee deplored, in particular, the total absence of democratic rules during the recent elections held in Equatorial Guinea on 7 March.

Reiterating its most recent resolutions, the Committee condemns the regime of Teodoro Obiang for its total disregard for democracy and human rights, which he once again demonstrated on this occasion, in a most cruel and vile manner.

It renews its support for the democratic opposition in Equatorial Guinea and especially for the Convergence for Social Democracy, CPDS, whose leaders are subjected to systematic persecution and criminal repression.

It invites member parties to support democracy and the respect of human rights in Equatorial Guinea, and to avoid any form of collaboration with the contemptible dictatorship of Teodoro Obiang.

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## RESOLUTION ON ALPHA CONDE

*Original: French*

The Socialist International Africa Committee, meeting in Bamako on 29-30 March 1999, in view of the motion passed at the meeting in Dakar on 25-26 January 1999, concerning the release of Alpha Condé and his co-detainees in Guinea,

and in view of the fact that, to date, four of the five members of parliament of the Assembly of the People of Guinea, RPG, arrested have been released, along with other detainees from the RPG and party officials who supported Alpha Condé in the Guinean election held on 14 December 1998:

*Expresses its pleasure* regarding these releases;

*Renews* its motion for the release of Alpha Condé;