

REJOINDER OF THE PRIME MINISTER

K. Simitis

The security system in the general area is problematic; peace and stability are still fragile. NATO offers a prospect of maintaining peace.

The negation or indefinite postponement of the inclusion of a country in the European Union or in NATO will impose a destabilising influence in the economic, but also the political and social fields. It will weaken the prospects of long term peace and stability in the area.

For these reasons, it is in the immediate interest of the international community to prevent developments which give the impression that there exist *a priori* two speeds: one in favour of some countries that are preferentially guided towards processes of closer cooperation and a second one for others who are relegated towards an uncertain future. The treatment of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe should obey common rules.

•••••

We, and especially we in the European Socialist Party, should try to build into our political priorities the necessity for a comprehensive policy for Southeastern Europe. This requires mobilisation and interventions with this aim towards all who directly or indirectly are in a position to affect the general trend of developments in Europe: the organs of the European Union, NATO, WEU, governments, political parties, non-governmental organisations. We must wake Europe to the fact that in the Balkan peninsula there exist crisis points and our presence is required.

•••••

Enlargement
of NATO

Three countries

prosperity, created internal conflicts and political instability, or lead to a total break with the past regimes. The latter tendency has led, in the name of national purity, to the dissolution of certain European States, often at a high cost in human life, and clearly constitutes the most fearful heritage of the past, given its possible consequences upon present and future peace. For it is a phenomenon which is still rife and one which seriously threatens the Balkans and certain areas of the former Soviet Union. Beneath the national rhetoric, which is merely an ideological pretext, lie many real problems of a political, social and economic nature to which a solution is hoped to be found through the desperate venture of national isolation.

However, as already mentioned, social and political instability, increasing mobility and a frequent tendency to make a complete break with the past are to be observed in many other parts of the planet. The utter failure of authoritarian forces around the world to appease social upheaval and to improve living standards has resulted in repeated swings to extremist political regimes in Africa as well as in Asia. Civil war, guerrilla conflicts, the imposition of dictatorships inevitably lead to massive population movements, many of which end up in Europe.

Faced with these realities which have transformed the nature of conflicts and wars in a world-wide scale, peace in Europe constitutes an isolated and endangered species. If we Europeans wish to preserve and expand it, we must earnestly look into the real causes of this unfortunate state of affairs and work out viable and long-term solutions. We must seek ways of furthering the promotion of democratic principles and values in those states, particularly in Europe, ~~suffering from political authoritarianism~~ exercised by purportedly democratic regimes. We must endeavour to help economic development in countries where poverty, unemployment and the undervaluing of the quality of life undermine the social fabric and lead to mass exodus of refugees and criminality. We must see to it that cultural, religious, linguistic or other differences leading to discriminations are overcome, because their existence,

combined with socio-economic inequalities, enhances the tendency for the unity of States to dissolve. It is true that we have already made a significant contribution to containing existing crises through the dispatch of peace-keeping forces to various parts of the world as well as through the development of international mechanisms ensuring the rapprochement among States, such as the one adopted a few days ago in Paris and which is designed to transform the relations between NATO and Russia. But we must also, and above all, search for the real causes behind the problems which in each case jeopardise peace and security in Europe and the rest of the world.

In Greece we are very well aware of the significance of the problem in Europe and in our immediate environment perhaps more aware than many other European countries, since we are situated right in the middle of the broad geographical area in which these problems occur with particular intensity. We are among the first to feel the consequences of the frailty of peace in this region of the world at our northern and eastern borders, but also in the south, from which we are separated only by sea. In this region of the world political and social discontent is associated with the absence of well-defined and social structure within States and the scarcity of any prospects of improvement. In some cases, the gravity of such domestic problems leads to an aggressiveness of official State authorities towards their neighbours and to the upset of the international status quo. In some others, it leads to extensive emigration, much of which reaches our country.

Our experience of this situation has contributed to forging our belief -on which I addressed you some minutes ago- that international activity for peace in the world should not be limited to containing the symptoms, as it were, of the problems, as and when they occur, or to short-term solutions which lead only to a provisional suspension of conflicts or of the threat of conflicts. Nor should the international community offer financial aid if such aid is not coupled with specific proposals for the creation of the infrastructure necessary to its best possible use.