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PROGRESSIVE GOVERNANCE NETWORK

The Berlin Communique

Progressive Governance for the 21st Century

We have come together in Berlin in order to exchange views and learn from each other about how to tackle the new challenges and opportunities that emerge in the 21st century. In November 1999 six of us met in Florence. We promised there to expand our network. Today, 14 Heads of State and Government have found common ground that defines a progressive political project fit for the new century.

We are bound together first and foremost by our values. We are committed to solidarism, fairness, and mutual responsibility. We believe in the equal worth of all and in mutual responsibility. These values are of increasing relevance in a world that is changing at rapid speed. We are liberated from old enmities and humbled by the responsibility to make up for lost years. The only way to do this is to follow a progressive path.

We are leaders who are aware of the opportunities of globalisation, without denying that we must fully recognize globalisation as an economic, social, and cultural reality, but it should be allowed to happen: it is a reality which we can collectively control; the key task of progressive governance in the new century is to help people make the most of change, by providing them to fulfill their talents in the new world that is being created.

We believe market economies must be combined with social responsibility in order to achieve growth, stability and full employment, promote social justice, and protect the environment. We believe sound macroeconomic and fiscal policies that encourage strong and steady expansion help spur full employment policies where continued growth encourages employers to create those previously denied good job opportunities. But the digital revolution, the growing global economy, as well as demographic and social changes mean that we can only achieve our values if we work in new ways. We know that the benefits of globalisation are not being shared by all our people, especially in the developing world, where income distribution has become increasingly unequal. Globalization must lead to higher living standards for all and not a destructive bottom at the expense of environmental and worker protections.

All these challenges require progressive action. We commit ourselves to the core values of opportunity for all, responsibility from all, and community of all. We practice new methods of progressive governance. In this, we can only be helped by wider dialogue, and invite you to join us in a commitment to meet the challenges and opportunities we describe below.

People want to live in a community, not merely work in a market; therefore they expect governments to effectively fight unemployment - in cooperation with management and unions; they want education and lifelong learning, because they know that this is the key to rising living standards and more social cohesion at the same time; they want government to promote opportunity and security; they want to protect the environment and improve local quality of life; they want to operate across national borders in order to recognise the links of the international community in the pursuit of these goals.

We are determined to take our countries forward and to establish safe and sound conditions to promote civil rights, employment and prosperity, equal opportunity for women and men, and to liberate the talent of all our people, but to do that we must share responsibility for

authorities and private individuals, between governments and international organisations, non-governmental organisations and the public sector. This question is at the heart of governance in the 21st century.

Advancing Prosperity

Our discussion at the Berlin-Conference has focussed in three areas. First, we have discussed the role of politics and government at national level in the context of global economic competition, global markets and global financial flows. For us, there are five key responsibilities for national governments in advancing prosperity:

- It must maintain stability in macroeconomic policy, supporting sound public finance: a prudent stance against inflation; it should also promote financial market stability, transparency and fair competition; only on this basis can companies and families invest with confidence; or we can keep our economies on a steady and sustainable growth path and envisage future prosperity.
- The new economy sweeping the globe is leading to unparalleled affluence. We believe that change and innovative technology can open up new ways of working and new markets that are more empowering and democratic. Economic progress can help to lift people above social barriers, but this demands that individuals are equipped with the capabilities of meeting these challenges.
- Education is critical to equity, development and citizenship and is the key to social and economic dynamism. Our aims include promoting lifelong learning and upgrading low skills. By expanding higher education we are also creating a vibrant research base for new technologies.
- Social and welfare systems need to be both enhanced and adapted. In developing countries, social safety nets can prevent the transmission of poverty and inequality of both work and income. We must also ensure that the provision for the ageing, the sick and the disabled is financed and adapted for the future to prepare for new demographic challenges. The foundation of social policy is employment policy, directed towards participation and especially preventing structural unemployment. In this field in particular we will share and learn from best practices.
- We are determined to fully exploit the opportunities that the new information and communication technologies create for prosperity, employment and participation. The role of government is to foster a climate for entrepreneurship to flourish, to help reduce costs for access to technology, and to promote research and scientific advance. We are also committed to closing the digital divide. All citizens need to possess the skills to participate in the technology that is changing the ways we live. We are aware that new technologies bring about new forms of work organisation which can affect workers' rights.

Strengthening Civil Society

Second, we discussed how to strengthen civil society. Thriving communities can become vital with changing social structures. Families need our support; citizens require secure neighbourhoods; children need to grow up without crime, drugs and violence; and indigenous people must be fully integrated into economic, social and political life. We record our abhorrence of xenophobia and ethnic and religious animosities in all its forms and our determination to fight against it on a national as well as on an international scale.

A strong civic society based not on prejudice but agreed rules and a reformed state can provide a framework for a dynamic market. Those in authority must be held accountable. Reform must make globalization work for all people. We consider the following issues to be key:

- We must modernise and update government to ensure that its focus is on addressing the problems our citizens face and on encouraging their development. Where the public or private sector delivers the public interest, we support it; where decentralisation gives control of their affairs, we support it; where technology can rationalise provision and make it more convenient, we support it.

- Public services are critical to equal opportunity and a civilised society, because we a quality of education, health, care and childcare, criminal justice and social services. C that these services must be driven by the needs of the citizen - for improved quality, convenience, more personalised service provision. That often means difficult reform, essential counterpart to increased investment to meet growing needs.
- For us, communities only deserve that name when all citizens, whatever their race, or sex, live in an atmosphere of tolerance and mutual respect. At a time of great pop movements, we must have clear policies for immigration and asylum. We are commit social inclusion and respect for ethnic, cultural and religious diversity, because they n societies strong, our economies more flexible and promote exchange of ideas and kno
- The digital revolution must be embraced by government in order to make it more an accountable and efficient. We recognize that digital technology is a powerful tool that new way to connect and communicate with their government.
- We need a new balance of rights and responsibilities as the basis for stronger comm affluent should lend society their abilities and talents, not exclude themselves from so who are underprivileged should be integrated, being offered new chances. We suppor role for the state, providing all citizens with the tools to develop themselves. Women rights, equal access to education and employment and equal pay for equal work. Con responsibilities in community life too. This relationship has to be emphasised.
- Indigenous minorities in several countries are among the most vulnerable worldwid that protecting and promoting their rights warrants special consideration and is a legi of international community.

Further Improving International Cooperation

Third, we aspire to be an international community of shared values. We see the need international social compact - the practical fulfilment at the international level of our strong communities at home. Such a compact recognizes interdependence, mutual responsibility for common goals. The developed world has duties to the developing w commitment is reciprocated - aid debt relief must be used for popular need not conflic must respect the environment, the benefits of trade must be shared. In order to adva justice and economic dynamism in developing countries, we must support the rule of institutions, free trade and security within and between nations as prerequisites to ec development. As the global economy and a shared concern for international affairs dr together, we need to advance the idea of community from a national, regional and gl

Just as we seek to advance social justice and economic dynamism for the whole popu own countries, so we have a responsibility to develop a more inclusive and sustainabl division of wealth and opportunity. We have international institutions dedicated to ma issues: trade, financial stability, conflict prevention, public health, education, labour, protection, economic development. We should particularly enhance those institutions fighting hunger, poverty, social exclusion and environmental degradation.

We recognise the demands for transparency and accountability in these institutions. \ that the strengthening of the international co-ordination and co-operation on issues c can make a significant contribution to reinforcing progressive governance at the dom ensuring more stable economic conditions and by fostering efforts to build a more evi globalisation.

We know that problems of poverty, child hunger, debt, conflict, and environmental de connected. A critical task for progressive Governments is to address the issues of pov underdevelopment. That is why we need efficient international co-operation that links solutions to these problems. This form of linkage is being pioneered in the connection relief and poverty reduction programmes. For us the following issues are key:

- We support free trade as an important instrument of economic development for the world, and as the route to new markets for industrialised countries. We will examine flows in the world economy which prevents direct investment even in those countries necessary economic essentials in place. A strengthened multilateral trading system is progressive governance to prosper at the international level by ensuring hard-working countries a fair chance to market their product abroad. We agreed that as a crucial step liberalisation developed countries and developing countries should provide the least developed nations enhanced market access.

- We are aware that a stable international financial environment is a crucial factor in economic growth and in allowing all countries to reap the potential benefits of globalisation. The international crisis have stressed the need for proper financial regulation. We support debt relief for HIPC. And we want to give more support to good governance in countries where the weakness of government that is undermining the rule of law and the development and social life.

- We see the need to improve the institutional framework in which financial markets operate. This includes the adoption of efficient regulation, supervising and accounting, codes of conduct, sound corporate governance, and a fair sharing of responsibility between the public and private sector. We agreed on the need for adequate regulation and supervision in order to strengthen financial stability and social justice.

- Globalisation, trade and technological advances should enable us to tackle widespread poverty better than ever before. It is our responsibility to secure that poor people and the poor are included in the present historic opportunities, especially because rapid technological advances tend to widen the inequality gap. Direct effective aid from both governments and non-governmental organisations is still needed. We will give it more priority and resist those who would

- We must turn the digital divide into international digital opportunities by training teachers and building strong partnerships with government, businesses, foundations, and civil organisations. We need to use new technologies to its fullest advantage, to improve health, promote education and foster cultural exchange and understanding. We believe that education is as important for the developing world as the developed world. We support the target to increase universal primary schooling. We must ensure that the children of the world in the future - are well taught by qualified teachers with proper materials.

- We celebrate the diversity of our nations. We encourage cultural diversity. Globalisation, indeed about more contacts and more exchanges, should not lead to uniformity, but to the enrichment of people and the opening of cultures.

- The global environment must be handed on safely to future generations. Sustainability is an important orientation for modern governance. This goal should be respected in all areas of international policy. We support the commitments of the Kyoto protocol and want to strengthen mechanisms, like emissions trading, to create common interest between the developing and developed world.

- We must make a concerted effort to prevent the spread of infectious diseases that threaten the health of the people of developing countries of their most precious assets - their people. We support an increase in resources on health infrastructure. We also commit to increasing our contributions to immunisation efforts that assist the poorest countries and to fostering the development of vaccines and immunisations to prevent diseases such as TB, Malaria, HIV/AIDS.

We, the leaders of progressive governments, believe that democracy in the 21st century is the ideals and instruments of hope for all. We act now in the interest of the future generations of the 21st century.

We have all learnt from this meeting and we all want to meet again. One of the conclusions of the Florence meeting is to broaden the network of progressive governments. We want our ministers and public administrators to meet and co-operate on a regular basis, to discuss solutions and to learn from each other. We will promote the exchange of civil servant

administrators and we will establish networks of thinkers and scientific institutions de identifying challenges and policy options. We believe our citizens should gain confider common experience and approach that we are taking. We look forward to developing all those who share our aims and values.



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